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# THE JOURNAL OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE





THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

*15th-century icon*



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# THE JOURNAL OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE

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# For the Name-Day of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church

February 25, feast day of St. Aleksey, Metropolitan of Moscow, is the name-day of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Aleksey II of Moscow and All Russia. On this day, according to tradition, His Holiness the Patriarch celebrates Divine Liturgy at the Epiphany Cathedral in Moscow, where the holy relics of St. Aleksey repose, assisted by the host of hierarchs and clerics of the Russian Orthodox Church. During the Liturgy, in the presence of a great number of worshippers, His Holiness the Patriarch receives congratulations on his name-day from the Holy Synod, the clergy and the faithful laity, as well as representatives of the state authorities and public organizations.

The name-day of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church is an occasion both for the Patriarch to assess the results of his activity over the past year and for the whole Church to look back, upon the successes, joys, griefs and trials lived through the year, thank the Lord, offer Him a common prayer and plead for the intercession of the Most Holy Mother of God and of St. Aleksey for the Orthodox Church and the Russian land.

A year ago, on February 25, 1993, the Primate of the Russian Church was for the first time congratulated on his name-day by all the branches of the state authorities. This was a recognition of the Russian Orthodox Church and its important role in our state and society.

In their congratulations the high guests stressed the outstanding service of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey in the preservation of church peace and unity which had a wholesome effect on the state and society. "In this hard time, You, Your Holiness, were sent by the Lord to the Russian Orthodox Church and Russia to unite faith and power so that the power of our faith might be strong and that we don't lose faith in power"—these words by one of the leaders of the state testify to the fact that today there is great hope on the part of our secular authorities that it is spirituality and moral values that will help revive Russia.

His Holiness the Patriarch said in his turn: "It is our duty to serve the aim of reconciliation, unity, spiritual and moral rebirth of the people. We must help settle inter-ethnic conflicts, work for concord and unity both in the Church and society. And if we succeed in doing something, it is not our merit for it is the grace of God working through us that grants us, humble servers of the Church, the spiritual revival we are witnessing today. And the honour and glory is not to us but to the Name of the Lord. We all must remember the words of the Saviour, Who sent the Apostles to preach: *When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do* (Lk. 17.10)." "These words of the Primate of the Church became both an appeal and a programme of life. Indeed, 1993 became the year when all church forces were aimed at spiritual enlightenment of Russians returning to the bosom of the Mother Church, when the Church became a real peacemaking force in settling conflicts, when society realized that it is the religion traditional for Russia alone that may open the way to unity and concord.

On February 5, 1993, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksey II of Moscow and All Russia had a meeting with President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation in the Kremlin. The subject of their talk was the social and economic problems that influence the life of the Church. His Holiness the Patriarch stressed the necessity to solve all kinds of problems in the spirit of public concord.

On April 20, 1993, President Yeltsin had a meeting in the Kremlin with heads and representatives of the main confessions and religious centres of Russia. The aim was to discuss the most urgent problems of the day: preservation of civil peace, revival of spirituality and morals of the people, ensuring of the basic freedoms of man, freedom of conscience in the first place. Life itself has shown us that militant atheism must disappear from the state policy for ever. The state has no right to form people's convictions, to interfere into the internal affairs of confessions.



The President stressed that "the changes in the policy to meet the requirements of religion and the faithful does not mean making advances, for the success of the reforms depends on all citizens, the faithful included. Political antagonism in society must not be aggravated by inter-religious enmity". The President called the problem of returning buildings previously owned by the Church a painful one and stressed the necessity of working out a long-term budget-financed state programme.

The religious activists dwelt on the basic problems of their Churches and confessions, expressed anxiety over the activity of foreign missionaries. Having thanked the President for the meeting, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II said: "All religious confessions of the country see their duty in ensuring peace, tolerance and concord in society, in establishing peace, without which the spiritual revival of society is impossible. And it is gratifying to know that the President and the government appreciate this mission."

On April 23, 1993, President Yeltsin issued an order to the Government of the Russian Federation "On Handing Over to Religious Organizations Cult Buildings and Other Property". It provides for a step-by-step handing over to religious organizations of buildings, territories adjacent to them and other property of religious character to be used temporarily or permanently for religious, educational, charity and other purposes specified in the statutes of religious confessions, taking into consideration, however, the interests of science and culture (preservation of the monuments of culture, access of tourists, guides and all citizens to them).

The fact that representatives of the state authorities and public organizations attend divine services, interest of the power-that-be in urgent problems of the Church and their help to the faithful both in the centre and the provinces—things, which the Church could not even think of several years ago, but common today, are gratifying, on the one hand, and, on the other, provoke attempts to groundlessly accuse the Russian Orthodox Church of trying to become a political force in society, a "state Church" she used to be before the revolution. The Church, through the mouth of her Primate, hierarchs and clerics, is patiently and clearly explaining her position to the public: to serve society by means of her spiritual power, spiritual riches.

**From the speech of His Holiness the Patriarch at the press conference in Volgograd on June 18:**

"Seeing the increasing influence of the Church on the life of society today, people often fear that the Russian Orthodox Church is yearning for the role she used to play before the revolution, when she was a state Church. That role brought us a lot of grief and suffering in the years of the revolution. That is why we are deeply convinced today that the Church should be separated from the state, should be free from its interference in her internal affairs and should not interfere in the political life of the state in her turn. But that should not mean separation of the Church from society, indifference to the processes taking place in it. When necessary the Church expresses her attitude towards events taking place. But our principal aim is the spiritual and moral health of society. We are not blessing clerics to become members of parties, for a priest should not divide his flock into his people and strangers."

**From the speech of the Patriarch at the meeting with People's Deputies of the Kostroma Region on May 7:**

"When new elections take place we shall decide not to give a blessing for deputy activity for clergymen, for, whether we want it or not, the involvement of church activists in politics is not useful for them. I myself used to be a People's Deputy of the USSR. Maybe at that time my participation in drafting a new law on the freedom of conscience was useful, because when we were working on it in the Supreme Soviet committee many lawyers considered the Law of 1929 perfect, that is why it was rather difficult to work out a new law ensuring real religious freedom and our participation in the work of the committee was necessary. Today, however, we should retire from political activity.

"My orations delivered in times of political crises cannot be regarded as an interference in state affairs—it is the word of a shepherd, an appeal to human reason."



The result of the mutual activity of state and Church authorities was the enriching of the experience of mutual understanding, joint work of church structures and different ministries and institutions, the return this year of many shrines to the Orthodox Church: churches, cloisters, icons. An outstanding and joyful event has been the resumption of divine services in the cathedrals of the Moscow Kremlin. On April 7, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God—patronal feast of the Annunciation Cathedral of the Kremlin—Patriarch Aleksy celebrated Divine Liturgy in this famous church, the domestic church of Russian tsars, for the first time after a long break. And on May 28 His Holiness celebrated his first liturgy at the newly-opened Archangel Michael Cathedral. It was the feast day of Prince St. Dimitry the Martyr whose relics repose at the cathedral—the burial place of Russian princes, princesses, tsars and tsarinas.

November 4 was the day of the consecration of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Red Square built anew and of the first divine service in it conducted in the presence of a great number of the faithful, representatives of the city and state authorities, as well as of public organizations. The consecration and divine service were conducted by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy assisted by hierarchs and the clergy. Yu. Luzhkov, Mayor of the city of Moscow, on behalf of the President and the government of Russia, congratulated all those present.

The past year was marked by one more event demonstrating the grace of God to our people returning to the faith of their forefathers: by the decision of the President of Russia, the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God and the Holy Trinity Icon by St. Andrei Rublev are to be handed over to the faithful. The necessity arises in this connection of organizing a special technical service to ensure their safety and conservation. However, the main guarantee of their safety is their return to the place they have belonged for ages, under the protection of the Lord and the Queen of Heaven.

**From the oration of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy after the consecration of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Red Square:**

"The cathedral where we have celebrated the first Divine Liturgy after its rebirth reminds us of the glorious events in the Russian history. It was built in memory of the liberation of Moscow from foreign invaders. This feat of the Russian warriors took place in the autumn days 381 years ago. The Church believes that our people was freed through the prayers of the Most Holy Mother of God Whose miracle-working icon helped and protected Russian troops in their hard labour of the liberation of the Motherland. We know from history that the liberation of Moscow in 1612 by the grace of God and through the prayers of the Most Pure Theotokos put an end to the Time of Trouble tearing Russia apart. The Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God built by the people's hero Prince Pozharsky became the symbol of the revival of our Motherland."

A clear sign of the revival of the Russian culture rooted in Orthodoxy are the numerous invitations of the Primate of the Church and the clergy to different concerts, exhibitions, festivals, meetings with intelligentsia.

Unfortunately, the process of the spiritual and cultural revival of Russia is accompanied with the propaganda, unprecedented in our country, of war, violence, national and social enmity, with moral degradation and other phenomena running counter both to Christian and to human morality. The state is indifferent to this propaganda spreading through the press, audio- and video-production, through the mass media which cannot but arouse anxiety of the Orthodox Church. On April 28, 1993, His Holiness the Patriarch addressed M. Fyodorov, Head of the Ministry of the Press and Mass Information of Russia, with an open letter, in which he wrote in particular: "Being convinced of the inviolability of the freedom granted to man by God, I do not call for repressive measures, which cannot solve the problem. However, I am convinced that imposing of the cult of immorality also limits the personal choice of the individual and has an especially negative influence on the formation of young souls, often incapable of critically apprehending what they see, hear or read. That is why I consider as useful the reasonable limitation of mass distribution of publications on the basis of thoroughly considered criteria. I also think that the mass media of today makes insufficient effort to teach people the good, to show them the advantages of



the honest, moral way of life, of which many worthy people of our Motherland, including pastors and laymen of the Orthodox Church can say a word." The letter found the minister's understanding, however, until now there have been no cardinal changes in the work of the mass media whatsoever.

Fruitful was the cooperation between the Church and the Customs of the Russian Federation. On April 19, 1993, Holy Week, at the patriarchal residence of St. Daniel's Monastery, A. Kruglov, Head of the Customs, handed over to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy a great number of icons (nearly 200) and church plate confiscated from those who attempted to smuggle them out of Russia. His Holiness the Patriarch regarded it as a Paschal present for all Orthodox believers and as a testimony of the reappraisal of values in our society, for society begins to treat icons and other church valuables as their spiritual heritage.

The interest of public organizations in the history and today's activity of the Church has become profound, the result of it being numerous public-church conferences, meetings, and publications by church and public leaders in the press. On March 26, 1993, at the Parliament Centre of Russia a conference "Religion, National Concord and Revival of Russia" took place. Participating in it were representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and other confessions of our country, as well as of scientific circles and the mass media. The participants in the conference discussed and approved a final declaration and resolution on the formation at the Parliament Centre of the Russian Federation of a consultative council "Scientists, Parliamentarians, Religious Workers for Inter-Ethnic Peace and Civil Concord" uniting people of good will irrespective of political, confessional or ethnic affiliation. The aim of the council is the creation in our society of the spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding.

A seminar "Church and Democracy" held on April 8 demonstrated an interest in the experience of the Church on the part of democratic movements. On the invitation of the organizers of the seminar Hegumen Innokenty Pavlov made a report on the Christian principles of democracy and on the position of the Russian Orthodox Church at the crucial moment in the Russian history in 1917-1918. In the course of the discussion it was noted that it is on the Christian basis of values alone that the democratic process in Russia can bear fruit.

The process of revival in Russia inevitably raises the problem of the correlation of national and religious factors, which has been one of the most painful themes for the Russian society for more than a century already. The 1st World Russian Council taking place in Moscow on May 26-28, 1993, was a fruitful dialogue between the Church and a realistically-minded trend of the secular national movement. Discussed at the Council were two points of view (Christian, church, on the one hand, and secular, political, on the other) on national problems, and economic, demographic and spiritual situation in today's Russia. A great interest of all those present aroused the speeches by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy and His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad.

**From the speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia at the opening of the 1st World Russian Council on May 26:**

"True Christian love of the Motherland means wishing it good and serving its good. And the good for a Christian is the Kingdom of God. Love of one's people and one's Motherland must not obscure the commandment to love one's neighbour, that is, any person irrespective of his nationality.

"The mission of the Church is salvation of mankind; the uniqueness of every personality and the diversity of people demonstrate the wisdom of the Maker and are the beauty of creation. That is why it is important that every personality, every nation preserve its uniqueness. Hence every man should work for the well-being of his people and his state, show regard for his history and culture, protect his Motherland.

"We, servers of the Church, do not regard patriotism as an element conniving at the vices of the people but as the one purifying them, transforming and thus bringing them nearer to sanctity. It is by following this way that we may bring our Motherland the real, absolute good and not a temporary, illusory one. We will not look for enemies but will revive spiritually with faith and courage, cast away sin being afraid of no one, even the worst enemy of mankind—the devil.



"And then, as it has been many times before, the new Rus will rise from the ashes and the abyss of sin, Rus that has given the world many zealots of faith and piety, Rus building churches in towns and villages, and in the hearts of people, Rus spreading the truth and love all over the world—Holy Rus."

It has become traditional for His Holiness the Patriarch to meet with the public during his trips about dioceses. During these meetings problems of the revival of towns and villages, construction of churches, and parish life are discussed. The Primate of the Church is often asked questions about the relations between the Church and the state, between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church Outside Russia and other confessions, as well as many other, often acute, problems. Stressing the peacemaking, unifying role of the Church His Holiness the Patriarch does not, however, try to evade the shortcomings in the activity of the Church, her problems.

In all times one of the greatest dangers for the Orthodox Church was inter-church splits. Recently the preservation of church unity has become a heavy burden for the Primate of the Church, hierarchs, the clergy and all the faithful for there is no member of the body of Christ not suffering from madmen parting the garments of Christ. Separatists tendencies born of local nationalism and political strife between different groups penetrate the church environment and often are being openly imposed on the Church.

A natural phenomenon of national states appearing on the ruins of the former USSR turns out to be for the Church a painful attempt to create "national Churches" which is contrary to the very spirit of Christianity. It happened in Moldavia, the Baltic States and the Ukraine. As far as the latter is concerned His Holiness the Patriarch characterised the situation there at the meeting with the public in Smolensk on May 3 in the following way: "The situation in the Ukraine is the most difficult one, both ideological and physical pressure being exerted... Mass support is being rendered to any kind of separatism, to the uncanonical so-called Autocephalous Church for example. Many people have physically suffered from wild outbursts of lawlessness reigning in the Ukraine. The Ukraine is our pain, but we hope that reason will prevail at last."

In April, during his visit to Estonia Patriarch Aleksy handed Bishop Kornily of Tallinn and Estonia the Tome confirming the granting of independence to the Orthodox Church of Estonia in church-administrative, economic, educational and civil affairs (this independence had been granted to the Church of Estonia as long ago as 1920). Estonian parishes remained in the canonical subordination to the Moscow Patriarchate in spite of the separatist mood of part of Estonian believers, which did not gain support.

The speech of His Holiness the Patriarch at the Congress of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods in whose activity certain antihierarchal and anticlerical tendencies can be traced, was imbued with concern for unity within the Orthodox Church.

**From the speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II at the Congress of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods on February 16, 1993:**

"The task of brotherhoods and sisterhoods is to work for the revival of church life in all its diversity in earnest cooperation with hierarchs and clerics and not to contrapose themselves to the hierarchy. We have a common task, we must see it and help each other promote church, parish, social, catechetical, enlightenment and charity activity. The clergy alone, without your help, cannot solve the problems the Church is facing today. These problems should be solved by the clergy and laymen who joined brotherhoods and sisterhoods to become our loyal and reliable helpers."

The past year has shown that the process of organization of parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia on the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate, which has brought a lot of pain and difficulties to the Orthodox believers in the recent years, is doomed to failure. Deceived by all manner of promises (mostly connected with material aid) laymen and clerics, and even whole parishes, have gone under the jurisdiction of the "outsiders", but now they come to realize the error and return to the bosom of the Russian Orthodox Church.

**From the speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy at the press conference in Volgograd on June, 18, 1993:**

"Besides the destructive processes taking place inside the former USSR, the unity



of the Russian Orthodox Church is threatened with a growing number of parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia on her canonical territory. The Church was organized in 1921 in Sremski Karlovci by hierarchs who had left the Motherland because of the revolutionary events. The first Primate of this Church former Metropolitan Antony Khrapovitsky of Kiev when forming the Synod of the Church said that it would be of a temporary character and would exist until the Church in Russia regained her freedom after which they would submit the report on their activity to the approval of the Moscow Patriarchate. However, the activists of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia still live by old categories and since 1990 have been trying to establish their parishes and hierarchy on our canonical territory. I think it only makes for the intensification of the division among Orthodox Russians.

"The Moscow Patriarchate is constantly rebuked of "Sergianism" by the Church Outside Russia. What is meant is the 1927 Declaration of Metropolitan Sergy, the then Head of the Russian Orthodox Church through which he tried to halt the persecution of the Church when clergymen were being accused of counter-revolution. The aim of the Declaration was to prevent the Russian Orthodox Church from being fully crushed in the case of which the Russian flock might have been deprived of spiritual guidance.

"Representatives of the Church Outside Russia also accuse us of ecumenism, i. e., cooperation with other Christian Churches, though up to 1961, that is, up to the entry of the Russian Orthodox Church into the World Council of Churches (WCC), representatives of the Church Outside Russia had been its members as representatives of the Orthodox Church of Russia. However, when the Russian Orthodox Church joined the organization at the Third WCC Assembly in New Delhi, the Church Outside Russia pounced upon us, treating ecumenism as a 20th-century heresy and calling for a complete break with Christians of other confessions. For 25 years I was one of the Presidents of the CEC and I know that on many issues—such as those of peace and social service—we managed to find a common language with Christians of other confessions on the European continent. In the 20th century it is not crusades we should call to but cooperation. When Churches live in a secularized world the possibility to discuss their problems jointly is a boon for them.

"We are prepared for a dialogue with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. On August 19, 1991, a Congress of Compatriots opened in Moscow. Its participants addressed me and Metropolitan Vitaly, Head of the Church Outside Russia, suggesting to start a dialogue. I responded with an open letter, in which I said that our Church is ready for a dialogue without any preliminary conditions. The leader of the Church Outside Russia, Metropolitan Vitaly ignored the letter, though there were clerics and laymen among its authors... I believe that the old generation of the Synod of the Church Outside Russia which fails to understand the changes under way in Russia, will be replaced by the generation of younger bishops more liable for a dialogue.

"Speaking of the divisions inside the Russian Orthodoxy in the post-revolutionary period, we should mention the Catacomb Church some secular journalists write about. It existed in the 1920s-1930s. It is no more—there is no one to hide from in catacombs. And people who take the guise of catacombists are, more often than not, impostors."

The Russian Orthodox Church is calling all Orthodox believers to peace and unity. She addresses also all confessions and beliefs traditional in Russia with an appeal for peaceful coexistence. On May 6 a meeting took place of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and Chairman of the Supreme Religious Council of the peoples of the Caucasus, Sheikh ul-Islam Allahshukyur Pasha-zade. A joint declaration was accepted at the meeting in which the two sides attested to mutual respect and discussed ways of cooperation, in particular in the cause of a peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

The November 7 peacemaking meeting at St. Daniel's Monastery of religious representatives of Azerbaijan and Armenia held on the invitation and with the mediation of the Russian Orthodox Church began with a silent prayer to the Lord for the pacification of the hostile sides. Opening the meeting, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy stressed the necessity for both sides to unanimously condemn war crimes and criminals no matter what people, Church or religion they might belong to; the



necessity to use the entire authority of our religious status and of our responsibility before the Lord and society and come out unequivocally and openly for peace and justice for all and each, for the inalienable rights and dignity of every individual and every nation, for humaneness and mutual forgiveness and love.

While paying considerable attention to inter-confessional dialogue, the hierarchs and the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church are fully aware of the importance of maintaining Orthodox unity and developing cooperation of the Local Orthodox Churches. On May 21-June 7 a visit was paid to the Russian Orthodox Church by Parthenios III, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa on the invitation of Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia.

On the day of Pentecost, Pope and Patriarch Parthenios III and Patriarch Aleksy II celebrated Divine Liturgy at the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra. The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church decorated the Primate of the Alexandrian Church with the highest award of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Order of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First Called, for the many-year labours of Pope and Patriarch Parthenios III aimed at the cooperation of the two Churches and development of the all-Orthodox witness and service.

On the invitation of Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, on July 10-19, 1993, a visit was paid to the Russian Orthodox Church by Bartholomaios I, Archbishop of Constantinople the New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch.

The meetings of the Patriarchs of Constantinople and of Moscow and members of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the speeches of the Patriarchs, imbued with the spirit of sincerity and cordiality, revealed mutual interest in the life and activity of the Constantinople and Russian Orthodox Churches. Stressed was an urgent need for the further development and strengthening of fraternal relations among all Local Orthodox Churches. The Primates of the two Local Churches confirmed their striving for deepening inter-confessional dialogue and for a greater Orthodox contribution to the activity of the WCC, by training cadres working in the sphere in particular. In the course of the meeting concern was expressed over the persisting inter-confessional tension in the regions of the Russian Orthodox Church where the Uniates wage an active struggle against the Orthodox Church and where Protestant fundamentalists' sects and pseudo-religious groups are engaged in proselytising activity.

The two Patriarchs firmly condemned the church schism in the Ukraine and declared their solidarity with and support of the suffering children of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Bartholomaios I officially stated that the Ecumenical Patriarchate would recognize only one canonical Metropolitan of Kiev—His Eminence Metropolitan Vladimir Sabodan of Kiev and All the Ukraine.

The Patriarchs discussed the situation in Moldavia where the Rumanian Patriarchate tries to establish its parishes and expressed confidence that problems of that kind should be solved through fraternal dialogue in strict conformity with the canons of the Orthodox Church.

The Patriarchs condemned the activity of the Russian Church Outside Russia aimed at establishing parallel non-canonical dioceses and parishes in the territory of the Moscow Patriarchate which divides the body of the Church and weakens the Orthodox witnessing in modern Russian society.

Both Patriarchs called up to the most responsible Patriarchal service at a time crucial for the Ecumenical Orthodoxy consider solidarity and unanimity of special importance. It should be brought to the knowledge of broad public circles that in the course of the visit both Patriarchs reaffirmed, with the feeling of the most profound responsibility before the Lord, that what might serve as a criterion for any confusion was not the constantly changing current socio-political situation but the unchangeable foundation of the sacred canons of undivided Orthodoxy sanctified by the authority of the Holy Ecumenical Councils of the Church.

The Patriarchs pointed to the necessity for all Local Orthodox Churches to participate actively in strengthening all-Orthodox unity in the face of the growing menace of the recent spread of all kinds of pseudo-Christian and antihumane sects and new religions within the precincts of the Russian and other Local Orthodox Churches.

Representatives of traditional religions within our Motherland have a great deep-rooted experience of cooperation and coexistence. But the Orthodox Church cannot



put up with the activity of various preachers who flooded our land as if people here have never been enlightened with Christ's Truth and have never had a Church. The Church cannot put up with the appearance of numerous sects, many of them banned in democratic countries but flourishing here with the silent connivance of the powers-that-be.

Significant is the fate of the "Theotokos Centre" and the "White Brotherhood" which ceased to exist ignominiously in November last year when their prophecy of the end of the world did not come true. The Orthodox Church has repeatedly raised her voice in defence of the people deceived by their false teaching. On March 16 a seminar on problems of sects was held in Moscow State University organized by the Department of Religious Education and Catechization of the Moscow Patriarchate. The final document of the seminar stated that the teaching of the "Theotokos Centre" is not Christian, that juridically the Centre, registered as a "trade union", is not a religious organization, that the practice and the theory of the sect are antihumane and man-hating (what is meant is the hatred they fan on religious grounds, the psychic and physical harm they cause to people's health, sex discrimination in the form of pathological misogyny). The final document contained an appeal to state bodies to set up a commission of experts which might clear up whether the sect is rightful. Filled with the pain for the maimed souls and lives of people was also the Message of Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on false teachings being spread in our land.

One of the causes of the popularity of false teachings is the absence in the course of many decades of church education and up-bringing. Only theological seminaries and academies, not numerous at that, were allowed, but the ban on non-theological disciplines was as strict there as that on religious disciplines at secular schools. That caused an actual break between secular and religious education. It has just been recently (since 1990-1991) that the system of church education has begun to take shape: church kindergartens, schools, higher education establishments.

On February 24, 1993, following the presentation of the St. Tikhon Theological Institute (December 8, 1992), there was the presentation of the Russian Orthodox University which has three faculties: philosophico-theological, biblico-patrolological and historico-philological. Rector of the Theological Institute, Hegumen Ioann Ekonomtsev, stressed that the purpose of the Institute was to combine secular education with religious one, to train laymen well-versed in theology.

Christmas readings—the annual conference initiated last year by the Moscow Patriarchate Department of Religious Education and Catechization, the Orthodox Pedagogic Society and the Ministry of Education of Russia—are to solve the problems of the personnel and curricula, those of studying the relative age-long church experience and exchanging the latest achievements in the sphere. The work of the conference was covered by church periodicals, in particular, by the *Pravoslavnoye obrazovaniye* (Orthodox education) journal set up at the Department of Religious Education and Catechization.

The work of the international round table on problems of religious education became regular. It was created at the DECR and one of its aims is the exchange of experience in religious education and training of representatives of different Christian confessions.

On March 16, 1993, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia was elected member of the Russian Academy of Education which testified to the recognition of the educational activity of the Church. And two weeks later His Holiness delivered a report at the Humanitarian Academy of the Armed Forces of Russia on the problems of spiritual and moral education of servicemen.

Facts of the recognition of the enlightening mission of the Church bespeak the growing understanding in our society of the truth reavealing that Christian enlightenment should be accessible to everyone no matter what kind of activity he might be engaged in, so that the soul of every Russian might be lit with the light which was brought to the Russian land one thousand years ago and granted our land the Orthodox faith, written language and culture. It is not fortuitous that the celebration of the Days of the Slav Written Language and Culture has become truly nation-wide today.

Since 1863 the feast day of Sts. Cyril and Methodius has been celebrated in Russia on May 24 (New Style). In modern Russia the tradition of celebrating the feast and the



Days of the Slav Written Language and Culture was reborn in 1985, and in 1991 the feast day of the saints—May 24—was declared a state holiday. Last year the celebration of the Days in Moscow and other cities of Russia was held on May 22-June 1. It was sponsored by the church authorities, the Ministry of Culture, the Slavonic Foundation of Russia, the Russian Homeland League, the Institute of the Slavonic and Balkan Studies and other organizations. Its programme included divine services, scholarly readings, exhibitions, concerts, theatrical performances.

**From the speech of His Holiness the Patriarch at the Russian Academy of Education on March 20:**

“Education is the main task of the Church... To educate a man means not just to pass over to him certain knowledge but to shape his image. Christians see in man the image of God. In many that image is veiled and darkened by sin but it is not to be completely destroyed, therefore the task of spiritual regeneration of man undertaken by the Church may be likened to the restoration of an icon: it is to be cleared of the later layers of paint so that the world may see the original brightness of colour, beauty of the line and harmony of the image...

“To my mind, spiritual and secular cultures must no longer live in enmity or separately. While keeping their independence and peculiarity they both should seek cooperation, not confrontation. We may think differently of God but we all agree that man is worth to be cared for. And may we all be one in our care of man, of creating his image, of making him truly humane.”

**From the report of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy delivered at the international study conference “Problems and Ways of Spiritual and Moral Education of Servicemen in the Russian and US Armies” held at the Humanitarian Academy of the Armed Forces of Russia on April 1:**

“We strive for the rebirth of the spiritual educational work of the Church in the Army. Of course we would like the institution of the army and fleet clergy to be restored in the shortest possible time and on a pre-revolutionary scale. But I am fully aware of the fact that it cannot be done out of hand. We are short of clergymen even in parishes, while the Army needs educated and selfless priests, capable of bearing hardships of army life and familiar with the army and fleet media. So I pray to the Lord that He may call to His field such pastors and believe that He will bring to pastorship new people, probably from the midst of the Army itself.

“However, the forms already taking shape of association of servicemen with parish priests cannot be an obstacle for the institution of army clergymen. Many spiritual pastors come to military units and schools to conduct sacraments or offices. It is necessary to seal the good initiative through a relative agreement between the Church and the Army. I have recently given my blessing to setting up a working group which is to prepare suggestions on working out a preliminary programme of pastoral and missionary work of the Orthodox Church in the Army before the institution of army clergy is introduced. It has as its members two Orthodox clergymen and officials of the Ministry of Defence administering the ties with religious organizations.

“The religious choice of officers and men should be voluntary. A pastor or a missionary is to be invited to a military unit only if its servicemen wish it. Orders are out of place here. If there are Catholics or Protestants or Moslems in the unit it would be appropriate to offer them an opportunity to meet separately with their spiritual guides and not to insist on their association with an Orthodox priest. It would neither be appropriate to insist on a meeting of officers and men with a missionary of a confession which has never been widespread in Russia and has no followers in the Army. Pastoral activity in the Army should take into account the God-granted freedom of choice. Foisting of faith has never born good fruit. A pastor should not resort to “blitzkrieg” methods and make people to accept baptism if they know nothing of the sacrament. The dignity of man, and, most of all, the dignity of our faith must be held in respect.

“I am convinced that our pastors will be able to become worthy spiritual guides of people in uniform. And I believe that it is after officers and men come to see the essence of



their life in Christ, that our army will play the role in society of a guarantor of peace, stability and freedom. This role is of special importance today."

The October events have shown that the authority of the Church in solving conflict situation has grown. The mediatory efforts of the Church in pacifying the sides was seen as a way of saving the country from the civil war. On September 26, in his sermon before the moleben "For Pacification" at the Dormition Cathedral of the Novodevichy Convent, Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna said: "Our country has again plunged into political confusion and discord. It is the duty of the Church, without intervening in political passions, to pray ardently to the Lord that He might rid us of all trouble. We are facing the choice: either to stop the madness or bury the hope for Russia's peaceful future." On September 29 Patriarch Aleksy issued an appeal: "Russia is on the brink of a precipice. What is especially tragic is that today the Russian state may fall apart. If it happens we will be cursed by the future generations. ... I am appealing tearfully to the sides in the conflict: prevent bloodshed! Do not undertake any action that might disturb peace, fragile as it is! Do not strive to solve political problems by force!" Similar call sounded in the statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church which decided that a special prayer be said every day and in every church for peace in the Homeland.

On October 3, for the first time after seven decades, the Orthodox believers prayed before the shrine of the Russian Land—the miracle-working Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God—and asked for Her intercession in those crucial days. For the first time Russia saw in the Church the only force capable of preventing a disaster. Nevertheless, blood was shed. The tragedy made everyone—politicians, common citizens, and the Church—think over the destinies of the Motherland.

**From the message of Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the hierarchs who came to the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra on the Feast of St. Sergy of Radonezh:**

"It is with bitterness and sorrow that we are saying: great are the sins of our people! They did not hearken to the call of the Church. Brother raised his hand against brother, shedding the blood of his near one. It is not to be justified. We have been punished according to our sins, for we rejected the ways of peace and stepped upon the path of enmity.

"On the Feast of St. Sergy of Radonezh, members of the Holy Synod and eminent archpastors, who came to the cloister of the Life-Giving Trinity at Sergiyev Posad as in the days of old, conducted a lity for our brothers and sisters who had lost their lives during the horrible fratricide in Moscow. We mourn over the sons and daughters of Russia and ardently pray for their near and dear ones, sharing their sorrow and suffering.

"In spite of the fact that the mediatory mission of the Church was accepted by the conflicting sides, people flouted moral principles and shed innocent blood. This blood cries out to Heaven and, as the Holy Church has warned, will remain an indelible Cain's seal on the conscience of those who instigated and perpetrated the godless murder of the innocent. The Lord will take vengeance on them in this life and at His Last Judgement.

"It is difficult for us humans, limited in time and space, to comprehend the acts of God at once. But their meaning is to be revealed later. Looking back at the past, we will see the beneficent and salvific act of Divine Providence. Time will pass and we will understand that the Mother of God responded to our prayers.

"The Lord Pantocrator and the Blessed Virgin will act in the world through us, feeble and unworthy. Russia's future depends on us. If we follow the path of vengeance, violence and chaos, the country will fall into a precipice. If the country's rulers yield to the temptation to persecute the weaker ones, they will ruin themselves and our people.

"We are all under the ruins now. And we should help each other to escape from these ruins, clear them up and build our common home in peace and concord. All that happened to us in these tragic days testifies to our spiritual and moral degradation. We will not cure the ailments of our society if we do not fight with sin





*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia blessing pilgrims at the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra on October 8, 1993, the Feast of St. Sergy, Hegumen of Radonezh*

and regenerate ourselves spiritually. No reforms, no laws, no matter how perfect they might be, will help us if people's souls remain waisted."

The Moscow Diocesan meeting held on December 20 at St. Daniel's Monastery and chaired by the Patriarch summed up the past year's work and marked the achievements and drawbacks in church life. His Holiness and other participants who took the floor noted that for the Moscow diocese and for all others the most crucial problem was that of the personnel. Fifty churches in Moscow have no priests, the same number of deacons is needed and twice as many parish priests. There was a candid discussion of the lack of well-trained clergymen, of economic difficulties in regenerating parish life, of the work of parish councils and communities.

The following statistics was cited: in today's Moscow there are 194 parishes and 267 functioning churches, besides, there are 7 Kremlin cathedrals, 21 monastery churches, 7 domestic chapels at the Moscow Patriarchate institutions, 6 churches for baptism, 16 baptisteries at state and other institutions; 367 priests and 110 deacons serve in Moscow parishes; churches are to be built in the newly-built districts of the city; Moscow has 70 Sunday schools, 17 Orthodox lyceums and high schools, 3 Orthodox kindergartens.

In his speech Patriarch Aleksy thanked all church labourers who fulfilled their service at such a crucial time.

At one of the meetings during his primatial visits to dioceses, His Holiness said: "While visiting different dioceses, I have seen and may testify to the fact that the process of spiritual regeneration is under way everywhere. People realize that they cannot do without spiritual bases, that the future of the Motherland cannot be built without these bases. The solution of many state problems is also closely connected with the rebirth of the moral principles of human life... If we are concerned with the future of Russia we must come back to our roots, to Holy Orthodoxy, which accompanied our people through its millennial history."



# Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia

## Biographical Data

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia (secular name, Aleksei Mikhailovich Ridiger) was born on February 23, 1929, in the family of pious believers. The father of the Patriarch, Mikhail Aleksandrovich Ridiger († 1962), was born in St. Petersburg, studied at a law school, finished high school in emigration in Tallinn, in 1940 he finished the three-year theological courses in Tallinn, and was ordained deacon and then priest. In the course of 16 years he was the rector of the Tallinn Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin and the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. He was also a member and later chairman of the diocesan council. The mother of His Holiness the Patriarch, Yelena Iosifovna Pisareva († 1959), was born in Revel (Tallinn).

Since his younger days Aleksei Ridiger was a server attendant in the church under the guidance of his spiritual father, Archpriest Ioann Bogoyavlensky (later Bishop Isidor of Tallinn and Estonia), from 1944 to 1947 was senior hypodeacon under Archbishop Pavel Dmitrovsky of Tallinn and Estonia († 1946), and then under Bishop Isidor († 1949). He studied at a Russian high school in Tallinn.

In 1945 Hypodeacon Aleksei was entrusted with the task of preparing the St. Aleksandr Nevsky Cathedral in Tallinn for divine services to be renewed there (it had been closed during the German occupation). From May 1945 to October 1946 he was an altar server and sacristan at the cathedral. From 1946 he was a reader at the St. Simeon Church, and from 1947, at the Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Tallinn. In 1947 he entered the Leningrad Theological Seminary which he finished with honours in 1949. On April 15, 1950, while a first-year student of the Leningrad Theological Academy, Aleksei Ridiger was ordained deacon, and on April 17, priest, and was appointed rector of the Epiphany Church in the town of Johvi, Tallinn Diocese. In 1953 Father Aleksei graduated from the Academy with the degree of Candidate of Theology.

On July 15, 1957, Father Aleksei was appointed rector of the Dormition Cathedral in Tartu and Superintendent

Dean of the Tartu Church District. On August 17, 1958, he was elevated to the rank of archpriest and appointed Superintendent Dean of the joint Tartu-Viljandi Deanery, Tallinn Diocese. On March 3, 1961, he was professed at the Trinity Cathedral of the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra.

On August 14, 1961, by the decision of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy I and the Holy Synod, Hieromonk Aleksy was made Bishop of Tallinn and Estonia, Administrator a.i. of the Riga Diocese. On August 21 of the same year Hieromonk Aleksy was elevated to the rank of archimandrite, and on September 3, his consecration Bishop of Tallinn and Estonia was conducted at the Tallinn Cathedral of St. Aleksandr Nevsky.

On November 14, 1961, Bishop Aleksy was appointed Deputy Head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

On June 23, 1964, by the decision of Patriarch Aleksy I, Bishop Aleksy was elevated to the rank of archbishop.

From December 22, 1964, to July 20, 1986, Archbishop Aleksy occupied the post of the Chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate. On May 1965 he was appointed head of the Education Committee, and freed from his duties on October 16, 1986, in compliance with his personal appeal. From October 17, 1963, to 1979 he was member of the Holy Synod Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-Church Relations.

By the ukaze of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy I of February 25, 1968, Archbishop Aleksy was elevated to the rank of metropolitan.

From March 1970 to September 1, 1986, Metropolitan Aleksy headed the Pensions Committee dealing with the granting of pensions to clergymen, their widows and orphans, and to church institutions personnel.

On June 18, 1971, in recognition of his zealous labours in preparing and holding the 1971 Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Aleksy was granted the right to wear the second panagia.

By the decision of the Holy Synod





*"Most Holy Theotokos, save us!" At the Abalak Icon of the Mother of God in the Omsk Cathedral Church of the Exaltation of the Cross, September 12, 1993*

of June 29, 1986, Metropolitan Aleksy was made Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, administrator of the Tallinn Diocese, and, as Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, became Head of the Leningrad branch of the Department for External Church Relations.

Metropolitan Aleksy's activities in the international arena: member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (1961-1968), Chairman of the "Church and Society" World Conference (Geneva, Switzerland, 1966), member of the "Faith and Order" Commission of the WCC (1964-1968).

For a quarter of a century Metropolitan Aleksy has been devoting his efforts to the work of the Conference of European Churches.

Metropolitan Aleksy has taken an active part in the work of home and international peace public bodies.

On March 11, 1989, he was elected the Foundation of Slavonic Written Language and Culture Council member.

Since January 24, 1990, Metropolitan Aleksy has been member of the Soviet Philanthropy and Health Foundation, since February 8, 1990—presidium member of the Leningrad Fund of Culture. In 1989, was elected USSR People's Deputy from the Philanthropy and Health Foundation.

During the years of his episcopal service Metropolitan Aleksy visited many

countries of the world and was a participant of many church functions.

On June 7, 1990, at the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Aleksy was elected Patriarch. His enthronization took place on June 10, 1990.

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy has published in the church and secular press at home and abroad over 250 works on theology, church history, peacemaking, ecumenism and other themes.

His Holiness is honorary member of the Leningrad and Moscow Theological Academies, and the Crete Orthodox Academy (Greece); the Council of the Leningrad Theological Academy granted him the degree of Doctor of Theology for his "Essays on the History of Orthodoxy in Estonia"; he is Doctor of Theology *honoris causa* of the Theological Academy in Debrecen, the Reformed Church in Hungary, and of the Jan Komensky Theological Faculty in Prague; Doctor *honoris causa* of the General Seminary of the Episcopal Church in the USA (1991); Doctor *honoris causa* of St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary in the USA (1991); Doctor *honoris causa* of the St. Tikhon Theological Seminary in the USA (1991); member of the Academy of Education of the Russian Federation (1992); Doctor *honoris causa* of Anchorage University, Alaska, USA





*After the moleben in the Trinity Chapel in Fort Ross (California), the southernmost point reached by Russian missionaries and merchants in Russian America*

(1993); State Prize Laureate of the Republic of Sakha, Yakutia, for his outstanding, selfless efforts in the cause of consolidating the peoples of the Russian Federation (1993); Professor Emeritus of Omsk State University for his great contribution to the sphere of culture and education (1993); Professor Emeritus of Moscow State University for his great

contribution to the cause of spiritual regeneration of Russia (1993).

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia has been awarded many orders of the Local Orthodox Churches and state orders of Greece, Lebanon and the USSR.

*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II at the Novo-Golutvin Convent, Kolomna, June 7, 1993*







*Festal procession from the Dormition Patriarchal Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin to the Slavyanskaya Square on the Feast Day of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Equal to the Apostles led by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia and His Beatitude Parthenios III, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, May 24, 1993*





*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II consecrating the operating theatre at the Second Town Hospital in Tambov, August 11, 1993*

*At a Christmas feast arranged by the Moscow Patriarchate for children at the Hall of Columns, January 10, 1994*





# CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

## Of Patriarch ALEKSY II of Moscow and All Russia to Archpastors, Pastors and All Faithful Children of the Russian Orthodox Church

*"Let heaven and earth today make glad prophetically, Angels and men, let us keep spiritual feast. For God, born of a woman, has appeared in the flesh to those that sit in darkness and shadow..."*  
(Lity, December 25)

Beloved in the Lord archpastors, God-loving pastors, holy monks and nuns, dear brothers and sisters, children of the Russian Orthodox Church abiding within her canonical territory and in diaspora,

With all my heart I congratulate you with the great feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

May the Divine Infant fill us all with the great joy at the good tidings brought by the Angel of the Lord to the shepherds which made them go unto Bethlehem and venerate the babe lying in a manger (Lk. 2. 8-18).

Apostle St. Paul says that spiritual joy is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5. 22), and, at the same time, a property of the Kingdom of God (Rom. 14. 17). Spiritual joy is kindled by love and through love the faithful rejoice in the truth (1 Cor. 13. 6) and are exceeding joyful in tribulations (2 Cor. 7. 4).

That is how St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (†1783) answers the question of what the spiritual joy is: "It is not the joy in things the sons of this age enjoy, for their joy is that of the flesh. It is the joy in the Lord and Saviour, in His grace and love of man, it is the consolation and peace of conscience... Christians should have spiritual joy when they fare well and when they fare ill..."

Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev the Holy Martyr (†1918) in his Christmas sermon addressed to children said: "Rejoice always, children, in the Feast of Christ's Nativity, rejoice in the Lord. Spiritual joy of the Nativity of Christ never age, we are never too old for it. When getting earthly gifts, do not forget of spiritual ones; otherwise your joy will be vain and shallow..."

My beloved, while keeping and multiplying our spiritual joy, let us continue in the new year of God's grace the beneficent renewal of church life and offer up thanks to the Great Shepherd (1 Pet. 5. 4; Heb. 13. 20) for the inexhaustible Grace granted by Him to our Russian Orthodox Church, to His faithful children.

My dear, in the course of the past year a multitude of parishes of our Church were established or re-established in the dioceses within our country. Divine services are conducted again at many churches returned to us and already restored. A lot of newly-built churches in different dioceses have started upon their salvific service. Through the grace of God, restored in its original form was the Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God built in 1636 by Prince Dimitry Pozharsky in memory of the deliverance of Moscow from foreign yoke and the ending of discord within our Homeland. The Lord has granted me the joy of consecrating the church on the feast of the miracle-working icon—October 22, Old Style.

Last year many monasteries and convents were returned to the Russian Orthodox Church, and monastic life was renewed there.

In some dioceses, those of Moscow, Smolensk, Riga and Ufa, holy icons of the Saviour, the Mother of God, and Sts. Sergy of Radonezh and Serafim of Sarov Miracle Workers exuded grace-giving myrrh. We consider it to be a tangible manifestation of the Lord's benevolence to the Plenitude of our Russian Orthodox Church.

Last year, through God's will, I visited eighteen dioceses in Central Russia, the Baltics, the Volga region, Siberia and the Far East. During those visits I received spiritual consolation venerating at church shrines all of which are bound with the historical destinies of local people, with the spiritual life of countless generations of the faithful... The visits involved prayerful communion with the archpastors, clergy and the



pious flock which united us in common prayer to the Saviour, His Most Pure Mother and the saints of God for our people and our earthly Homeland, and strengthened us spiritually. I remember everyone I met with, through God's will, in my prayers and hope they offer up their prayers for me. These visits gave me an opportunity to discuss in dioceses urgent problems of church life and think of the ways of their solution.

The most urgent problem of every parish of our Church, every monastic community, is a constant efficient activity aimed at spiritual enlightenment of the people of God, the preaching of Christ our Saviour. Every parish, every cloister should be a school of piety, a centre of religious education of children, the youth, of people of all ages and every status, a source of inspiration for creating and strengthening a wholesome Orthodox family, an initiator of spiritual patronage over kindergartens and orphanages, hospitals and homes for the aged, army units, prisons. Our entire Church, her every parish and cloister, every believer, should do their best to counter the spread of vices in our society.

The all-Church Orthodox youth movement, fellowships, sisterhoods and all institutions uniting laymen of the Russian Orthodox Church are called upon to intensify their activity for the benefit of the Mother Church and the earthly Homeland. And they must, all the while, invariably maintain everyday canonical ties with the Supreme Authority of the Church and not deviate from her original traditions.

Our theological schools: academies, seminaries, precentors' and icon painters' classes, take a place of their own in the holy process of regeneration of traditional forms of the Russian Orthodox Church activity. May the Lord bless the heads, teachers and students of these schools who selflessly fulfil their far from easy obedience in the most difficult economic conditions of our days, building, in the full sense of the word, the future of our people and our Church.

In September last year the beloved Daughter of our Church, the Orthodox Church in America, initiated the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of Orthodoxy in the American continent born of the selfless efforts of the monks of our Valaam and Konev monasteries. The tree of Orthodoxy has taken root and blossomed on the American soil due to the toils of Hieromonk Yuvenaly the Holy Martyr, St. Herman of Alaska, St. Innokenty of Moscow, St. Tikhon, Patriarch of All Russia, and many others. We were cordially received in the USA by the Orthodox and by representatives of other religious spheres and public and state figures. Zealous prayer and genuinely fraternal communion keynoted our stay in the USA and filled us with spiritual joy.

The political crisis in Russia, which became especially acute in late September, made me return to Moscow before the 200th anniversary festivities programme was completed. I and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church have done our best, including a most difficult mediatory mission, to prevent the fratricidal bloodshed. However, people, ignoring the call of the Church, lifted their hand against their neighbour, and, at the beginning of October, the innocent blood of many people was shed. We constantly offer up zealous prayers for all those who perished or suffered, for the good estate of Russia, and call for repentance. We repeat the moving words of the prayer of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of All Russia: "O Lord, Great and Wonderful!... Alleviate dissent and discord in our land, shield us from wrath, murder, enmity and anger... may we love each other again and abide in Thee, our Lord and Master, as Thou commanded us."

My beloved, once again I congratulate you all on the joyous feast of the Nativity of Christ and a New Year. May we not slacken in offering up our daily prayers and in labouring for the glory of God, for the benefit of those near and far-off, for the welfare of our earthly Motherland. May the Lord, who has come into this world for the sake of us men and of our salvation, help every one of us to bring to His manger the fruit of his or her spirit, so that, according to Apostle St. Paul, in a great trial of affliction we abound in joy (2 Cor. 8. 2).

May the Lord of love and peace be with us all!

*ALEKSY II,  
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia*



## DECISIONS OF THE HOLY SYNOD

August 26, 1993. The Holy Synod resolved to relieve Archpriest Georgy Goncharov of the post of the Russian Orthodox Church representative at the World Council of Churches (WCC) and of that of the rector of the stauropegion parish of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos in Geneva and to appoint to these posts Hegumen Nestor Zhilyaev, assistant to the Head of the Department for External Church Relations (DECR) of the Moscow Patriarchate.

October 1, 1993. The Synod heard a report of Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Chairman of the Commission for Canonization of Saints, who submitted the commission's document: "On the Procedure of Canonization of Locally Revered Saints in the Russian Orthodox Church at the Diocesan Level". The Holy Synod approved the procedure of canonization of saints, suggested by the commission, and recommended it for a strict implementation in all dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church.

October 2, 1993. The Holy Synod blessed the opening of the following cloisters:

- the Convent of the Nativity of the Mother of God in the town of Ussuriisk, Vladivostok-Primorye Diocese. Sister Maria Ponomaryova has been appointed its Mother Superior;

- the Convent of St. Tikhon and the Transfiguration of Our Saviour in the town of Zadonsk, Lipetsk Region (Voronezh-Lipetsk Diocese);

- four cloisters on the territory of the Novgorod-Staraya Russa Diocese:

- 1) St. Nicholas's Convent. Mother Superior—Hegumene Antonia Korneyeva;

- 2) the Valдай Monastery of the Iviron Icon of the Mother of God;

- 3) the Novgorod Monastery of St. George (Yuri) with the Perynsky Skete;

- 4) the St. Varlaam and Transfiguration Monastery;

- the Svetogorsk Convent of the Nativity of the Mother of God (14th cent.) in the town of Pskov, Pskov-Velikiye Luki Diocese;

- the Holy Spirit Monastery in the town of Ekabrilis, Latvia;

- the Sts. Boris and Gleb Monastery in the town of Torzhok, Tver and Kashin Diocese. The monastery was founded by St. Yefrem of Novy Torzhok in 1054. Its present Father Superior is Hegumen Vassian Kurayev;

- a convent at the Ufa Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Ufa-Sterlitamak Diocese.

At its session, held on November 1, 1993, the Holy Synod, chaired by the PATRIARCH,

HEARD: the report of Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia on his official

visit to the USA, where he stayed from September 16 to 27, 1993, on the invitation of His Beatitude Theodosius, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and on the participation of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, headed by him, in the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Orthodoxy in North America.

RESOLVED: 1) that the report be acknowledged;

- 2) that praises be offered up to the All-merciful Lord for the successful completion of the historic journey of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church to attend the festivities marking the 200th anniversary of Orthodoxy in America and that noted with satisfaction be the fact that His Holiness the Patriarch and his companions followed the same route, through Siberia and the Far East, as the monks of the Valaam and Konev monasteries, who had come to Alaska two centuries before and who brought the light of Christ's truth to distant America;

- 3) that profound satisfaction be expressed with the fact that the liturgical communion of the Primates of the two Sister Orthodox Churches, their archpastors, clerics and laymen, as well as other divine services conducted in the Orthodox churches of the cities visited by the delegation, occupied a central place in the festivities' programme;

- 4) that noted with satisfaction be the participation in the celebration of representatives of other Local Orthodox Churches, performing their service and witness in the United States of America, and also of prominent figures of non-Orthodox Churches and religious associations, and their fruitful meetings with Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, and Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations;

- 5) that specially noted be the participation in the programme of festivities of clergymen and laymen of the Patriarchal parishes in the USA, who thereby shared the spiritual joy over the event with the Primate of their Church;

- 6) that President William Clinton of the USA be thanked for his personal message addressed to Patriarch Aleksy in connection with the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Orthodoxy in North America. The meeting of the US President and Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, scheduled for September 29, did not take place, because the Patriarch left for Moscow on September 27 in connection with the crisis situation in the capital of the Russian Federation;

- 7) that noted with gratitude be the conferment upon Patriarch Aleksy II of the degree of Doctor of Theology *honoris causa* by the



Alaska Pacific University, as well as the cordial receptions held in the St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Theological Seminary on Kadiak Island and in the Patriarch Afinagor Pan-Orthodox Patriarchal Theological Institute in San Francisco, where a message of greeting addressed to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church by His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios I was read out;

8) that noted be a great interest displayed by broad American public circles and the mass media in the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Orthodoxy in North America and in the American visit by Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia;

9) that welcomed be the results of the meetings and talks held by the Primates of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America during which a wide range of questions was discussed in brotherly accord, questions connected with various aspects of life of the two Sister-Churches, in particular, the problem of the church schism in the Ukraine, resolutely condemned by Patriarch Aleksy II and His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius, as well as issues related to the pan-Orthodox preparations for the Great and Holy Council of the Eastern Orthodox Church;

10) that profound gratitude be expressed to His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius, hierarchs, clerics and the laity of the Orthodox Church in America for the exceptional attention and cordial hospitality accorded to Patriarch Aleksy II and his party.

Unfortunately, the official programme of the visit by the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church was not carried out in full, as Patriarch Aleksy had to cut it short and return to Moscow five days earlier than planned due to an extremely tense political situation that arose there at that time. This circumstance prompts us to express to all the religious, state and public figures, associations and organizations, which prepared their participation in the programme of the American visit by the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, but who did not have an opportunity to implement it, heart-felt gratitude for their good intention, the efforts involved in the preparatory work and also the hope that the meetings with the Patriarch, envisaged in the programme, will take place later.

**CONSIDERED:** changes and replacements in the Magadan See.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that Hieromonk Rostislav Devyatov of the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra, teacher at the Moscow Theological Seminary, be appointed Bishop of Magadan and Chukotka;

that upon his elevation to the dignity of archimandrite the ceremony of episcopal nomination and consecration be held in the city of Moscow;

2) that His Grace Bishop Arkady of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk and the Kurils be released from his duties of ad interim administrator of the Magadan Diocese;

that ukases be issued to this effect.

**CONSIDERED:** the filling of vacancy in the Kemerovo See.

**RESOLVED:** that His Grace Bishop Sofrony of Tomsk, ad interim administrator of the Kemerovo Diocese, be appointed Bishop of Kemerovo and Novokuznetsk and released from his duties of the vicar of the Novosibirsk Diocese.

That ukases be issued to this effect.

**HEARD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Chairman of the Commission on Canonization of Saints, who submitted material related to canonization of Metropolitan Filaret Drozdov (1782-1867) of Moscow and Kolomna.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that the submitted documents be forwarded to ruling hierarchs in all dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church for a more detailed acquaintance of archpastors, pastors and laymen with the outstanding hierarch's many-year and extensive service to Christ's Church so as to ascertain the will of our multimillion Church on his canonization;

2) that all ruling hierarchs be requested to forward the results of the study and opinions on this issue in their respective dioceses to the commission's chairman, His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly;

3) that His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly be requested, upon the receipt of all opinions, to submit the results of this investigation to the Holy Synod.

**HEARD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Chairman of the Commission on Canonization of Saints, who submitted material on canonization of Protopresbyter Aleksandr Khotovitsky and Archpriest Ioann Kochurov, who had suffered at the time of the oppression of the Russian Orthodox Church.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that the texts of the *Lives* of Holy Martyr Ioann and Holy Martyr Aleksandr, as well as the draft Acts of the Holy Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church on their canonization to be submitted to the Bishops' Council, be approved;

2) that the submitted iconographical images of Holy Martyr Ioann and Holy Martyr Aleksandr be approved.

**HEARD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna on the setting up, in accordance with the decree issued by Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation Viktor Chernomyrdin on October 23, 1993, of a special commission for the investigation and re-burial of the remains of the Russian Emperor Nikolai II and members of his family, and on the inclusion of His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly in this commission.

**RESOLVED:** that blessing be given for participation of His Eminence Metropolitan Yuve-



naly of Krititsy and Kolomna in the commission for the investigation and re-burial of the remains of the Russian Emperor Nikolai II and members of his family.

**CONSIDERED:** the forthcoming official visit of the Primate of the Autonomous Orthodox Church of Japan, His Eminence Theodosius, Archbishop of Tokyo, Metropolitan of All Japan, to the Russian Orthodox Church.

**RESOLVED:** that, taking into account the services of His Eminence Theodosius, Archbishop of Tokyo, Metropolitan of All Japan, in developing the life of witness and service to the Autonomous Orthodox Church of Japan, as well as his contribution to bettering relations between the Mother Russian Orthodox Church and her Daughter, the Autonomous Church of Japan, His Eminence Metropolitan Theodosius be decorated with the highest award of the Russian Orthodox Church—the Order of Apostle St. Andrew the First-Called.

**CONSIDERED:** the appointment of a bishop to Canada to administer the patriarchal parishes in Canada.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that His Grace Bishop Mark of Argentina and South America be appointed Bishop of Kashira, Vicar of the Moscow Diocese, and that he be charged with administering the patriarchal parishes in Canada;

2) that His Grace Bishop Pavel of Zaisk, administrator of the patriarchal parishes in the USA and Canada, be released from administering the parishes in Canada;

3) that His Grace Bishop Platon of Yaroslavl and Rostov be appointed Archbishop of Argentina and South America;

that ukases be issued to this effect.

**HEARD:** the petition of His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, concerning appointment of Archimandrite Feofan Ashurkov, Exarch of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, to the post of Deputy Head of the Department for External Church Relations.

**RESOLVED:** that Archimandrite Feofan Ashurkov be appointed Deputy Head of the Department for External Church Relations, relieving him of the post of the Exarch of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa.

**CONSIDERED:** the state of affairs in the Metochion of the Russian Orthodox Church in Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that in view of the expiration of the term of his mission abroad, Hieromonk Aleksandr Zarkeshev be recalled from the metochion and placed at the disposal of His Eminence Metropolitan Ioann of St. Petersburg and Ladoga;

2) that Father Sergy Trukhachev be

appointed cleric of the Metochion of the Russian Orthodox Church in Karlovy Vary, relieving him of the post of the rector of the Church of Christ's Resurrection in Zurich.

**HEARD:** communication by His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, about the 5th World Conference "Faith and Order", held in Santiago de Compostela (Spain) on August 3-14, 1993, and about participation in the work of this conference of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, headed by Prof. Protopresbyter Vitaly Borovoy, Deputy Head of the Department for External Church Relations.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that the report be acknowledged;

2) that the contribution made by the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church to the work of the conference be approved.

**HEARD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, on the Seventh Peace Conference of representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and Christians in Japan, held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on September 23-25, 1993, on the theme: "the Role of Religion in Building Up a Human Society Based on Peace, Justice and the Integrity of Creation", and on the participation in this conference of a delegation headed by His Grace Archbishop Vladimir of Tashkent and Central Asia.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that the report be acknowledged;

2) that satisfaction be expressed with the results of the Seventh Peace Conference;

3) that continuation of peacemaking cooperation between representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and Christians in Japan be acknowledged as useful.

**HEARD:** request of His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod for giving their blessing to conduct the instruction process in the Smolensk Interdiocesan Theological School according to the theological seminary curriculum.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that blessing be given to the Smolensk Interdiocesan Theological School to conduct the instruction process according to the theological seminary curriculum;

2) that the question of transforming this theological school into a theological seminary be considered upon the completion of the four-year course of study on the basis of its results.

**HEARD:** petition of His Eminence Metropolitan Nikolai of Nizhni Novgorod and Arzamas for blessing the opening, in the village of



Oranki, Bogorodsk District, Nizhni Novgorod Region, of a monastery dedicated to the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God, and for appointing Hieromonk Aleksandr Lukin its father superior.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that blessing be given to the opening of the Monastery of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God in the village of Oranki, Bogorodsk District, Nizhni Novgorod Region;

2) that Hieromonk Aleksandr Lukin be approved as Father Superior of the Monastery of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God.

At its session held on November 2, 1993, the Holy Synod, chaired by the PATRIARCH,

**HEARD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch to All Belarussia, on his trip to Bulgaria on October 19-20, 1993, as a member of the delegation of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarussia, and on his visit, paid on the instruction of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, to His Holiness Patriarch Maksim of Bulgaria to deliver him a message from the Patriarch of Moscow. His Holiness Patriarch Maksim handed over to His Eminence a message of reply to Patriarch Aleksy II.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that the report be acknowledged;

2) that profound satisfaction be expressed with the exchange of messages between the Primates of the Russian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, stating their determination to consolidate the unity of the Local Orthodox Churches.

**HEAD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch to All Belarussia, on the sessions of the Synod of the Byelorussian Exarchate, held on June 27 and August 5, 1993 (reg. Nos. 22, 23).

**RESOLVED:** that the report be acknowledged.

**HEARD:** the report of His Eminence Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, on the state of affairs in the Zurich Vicariate and the Resurrection parish of Zurich, Switzerland.

**RESOLVED:** 1) that in view of his old age and poor health, His Grace Archbishop Serafim of Zurich, Vicar of the Korsun Diocese, be relieved of his post and superannuated;

2) that gratitude be expressed to His Grace Archbishop Serafim of Zurich for his many-year service abroad for the good of the Mother Church.

**HEARD:** information about the financial situation in the Moscow Patriarchate: financial results for the first nine months of

1993, the overall church budget for the 4th quarter of 1993.

**RESOLVED:** that the information about the financial situation in the Moscow Patriarchate be acknowledged.

**CONSIDERED:** the position of Orthodoxy in the Ukraine.

**RESOLVED:** In connection with the anti-canonical election of two "patriarchs" of the so-called Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—the Kiev Patriarchate, the Holy Synod testifies with bitterness that these acts have further aggravated the position of Orthodoxy in the Ukraine, complicated and difficult as it is. The self-styled anticanonical "patriarchates", established with the direct participation and support of political forces, alien to the Church, are instruments of the Church's destruction, for they carry lies and deliberate deception of believers. The very fact of the emergence of two "patriarchates" in one place and for one people is an obvious sign and evidence of this deception.

The persons, who dare to illegally accept the holy dignity of Patriarch, commit sacrilege and, thus, a mortal sin.

Condemning the blasphemous acts of the schismatics, the Holy Synod expresses its wholehearted support for courageous and honest efforts of the episcopate, clerics and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, headed by Metropolitan Vladimir Sabodan of Kiev and All the Ukraine, her only canonical Primate, recognized by all Local Orthodox Churches as such.

We believe that now, too, as was not infrequently the case in the past, the schism will be overcome not by human effort, but by the power of God, and peace and church unity will triumph on the long-suffering land of the Ukraine.

We also believe that the Lord will direct the historical path of the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine so that her canonical status could fully meet the aspirations of the Ukrainian episcopate, clergy and believers.

**CONSIDERED:** replacement in the Yaroslavl See.

**RESOLVED:** that Archimandrite Mikhei Kharkharov, cleric of the Yaroslavl Diocese, be appointed Bishop of Yaroslavl and Rostov, with his nomination and consecration as bishop to take place in the city of Yaroslavl; that an ukase be issued to this effect.

**CONSIDERED:** the application of the Holy Synod Decision adopted on October 8, 1993, at a session with the participation of the hierarchs who had come to the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra on the commemoration day of St. Sergy of Radonezh.

**NOTE:** This decision was adopted in connection with the coming elections to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation



and to other representative government bodies. Considering that work in some representative government bodies, especially at federal level, will be carried out on a permanent basis and will leave no time at all for other pursuits, which rules out the possibility for a clergyman, if he is elected, to discharge the pastoral duties imposed on him by God, and, bearing in mind that such clergymen's work in the highest bodies of state administration has already caused discord and divisions among believers, the Holy Synod resolved on October 8, 1993, to enjoin clergymen to abstain from participation in elections as nominees for representative government bodies, functioning on a permanent basis, especially at federal level. The clergymen, who disobey this decision, shall, in accordance with the canonical rule of the Orthodox Church, be defrocked.

This decision was unanimously adopted by the Holy Synod on the basis of the experience of clergymen's participation in elective representative government bodies and also in keeping with the standards and principles of the canonical law of the Orthodox Church.

As is known, clergymen of the Russian Orthodox Church participated in the work of the pre-revolutionary State Duma.

After the 1917 Revolution, until recent years, clergymen were strictly barred from any participation in state government bodies. Several years ago this state of affairs changed fundamentally, and clergymen got the right and opportunity to be elected to representative government bodies. Some clergymen became people's deputies. However, the experience of clergymen's participation in elective bodies has shown that, unfortunately, most of them became involved in political struggle, which runs counter to the Church's pastoral approach to dealing with social problems.

The holy canons of the Orthodox Church forbid clergymen to occupy high secular posts.

The Holy Synod has been informed that Hegumen Innokenty Pavlov, a Moscow clergyman, and Presbyter Gleb Yakunin, a clergyman of the Moscow Diocese, were nominated for elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation. The Holy Synod invited these clerics to its session held on November 1-2, 1993. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II and the Holy Synod members had a talk with them, during which they stated their position on the issue in question and called upon both clerics to withdraw their nominations and thus remain faithful to their pastoral calling. Seeking to prevent the spiritual death of its children, the Holy Synod exhorted them not to take the fatal step, not to oppose the Church and thus introduce schism into the life of the Church and society.

Hegumen Innokenty Pavlov, who had given consent to his nomination prior to the Holy Synod decision of October 8, 1993, declared that, for the sake of church peace and in fulfilment of his monastic obedience, he decided

to withdraw his name from the list of the election association called "The Russian Christian Democratic Party".

Presbyter Gleb Yakunin refused to pay heed to all exhortations to obey the Holy Synod decision of October 8, 1993, and declared his intention to take part in the election campaign as a nominee.

**RESOLVED:** that in view of the deliberate disobedience to the Church, expressed in the refusal to follow the Holy Synod decisions, and in accordance with Canons 6 and 81 of the Holy Apostles, Canon 11 of the Double Council, Canon 10 of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, the Holy Synod decision of October 8, 1993, in its part 3 be applied to Presbyter Gleb Yakunin and that he be defrocked.

**HEARD:** the information of His Grace Archbishop Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk about the opening, in the Kaluga Diocese, of the Kaluga Hermitage of St. Tikhon and reviving monastic life there.

**RESOLVED:** that blessing be given to the opening in the Kaluga Diocese of the Kaluga Hermitage of St. Tikhon.

**CONSIDERED:** the summoning of hierarchs for the 1993/1994 winter session of the Holy Synod.

**RESOLVED:** that the following hierarchs be summoned for the 1993/1994 winter session of the Holy Synod:

1. Archbishop Feodosy of Omsk and Tara;
2. Archbishop Melkhisiedek of Yekaterinburg and Verkhoturys;
3. Archbishop Isidor of Krasnodar and Kuban;
4. Bishop Antony of the Urals and Guryev;
5. Bishop Lev of Novgorod and Staraya Russa;
6. Bishop Kornily of Tallinn and All Estonia.

**ALEKSY,**

*Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia*

#### MEMBERS OF THE HOLY SYNOD:

<b>VLADIMIR,</b>	<i>Metropolitan of Kiev and All the Ukraine</i>
<b>FILARET,</b>	<i>Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch to All Belarussia</i>
<b>IOANN,</b>	<i>Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Ladoga</i>
<b>YUVENALY,</b>	<i>Metropolitan of Krutitsy and Kolomna</i>
<b>KIRILL,</b>	<i>Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations</i>
<b>LEONTY,</b>	<i>Metropolitan of Orenburg and Buzuluk</i>
<b>KLIMENT,</b>	<i>Archbishop of Kaluga and Borovsk</i>
<b>VIKTOR,</b>	<i>Bishop of Tver and Kashin</i>
<b>KORNILY,</b>	<i>Bishop of Tallinn and All Estonia</i>
<b>YEVLOGY,</b>	<i>Bishop of Vladimir and Suzdal</i>
<b>YELEVFERY,</b>	<i>Bishop of Chimkent and Tselinograd</i>



*Bishop FILARET of Dmitrov,  
Rector, Moscow Theological  
Academy and Seminary*

## ORATION

### Delivered at the Commencement Day at the Moscow Theological Schools

September 1, 1993

Very Reverend Fathers, members of the faculty and students of the Moscow Theological Schools!

I congratulate all of you on the beginning of a new academic year, opening a new term for your lofty and responsible endeavours and undertakings, darings, hopes, theological and grace-filled spiritual experience. In the coming academic year you are to rise to a new stage in your intellectual, moral and religio-spiritual ascent, to partake of a still greater plenitude of the eternal wisdom and theological legacy of the Church, which you are called upon to serve to by your word, toils, contemplation and creative endeavours.

Today, in the humble veneration of the unceasing action of the all-gracious and salvific Providence, we can say: indeed, the Lord God is living and so is His Church! Because you—the new young generation of our Church—are, as the Apostle said, *living stones*, of which the Church is built up (1 Pet. 2. 5). Many of you lived prompted by elemental impulses of this world, but God touched your heart with His Life-giving grace and mysteriously kindled in it the flame of faith which banished the cold and darkness of disbelief. In the Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation you were introduced into a new and wondrous world, becoming coheirs to the holy and mysterious reality whose name is Life Eternal. As St. Gregory of Nazianzus said, you have clothed yourselves in imperishability, purged yourselves for the Spirit, enlightened yourselves with the light of knowledge and prepared yourselves to become worthy preachers of the Holy Scripture.<sup>1</sup> Your young conscience, not yet overburdened with transient and delusive knowledge of the world surrounding us, can more easily and clearly perceive the spiritual essence of the things which, in their totality, underlie everyday life in all its profundity. By entering in your conscious and ripe age, the sacred precincts of the Church, you possess an incontestable advantage to be incomparably close and much more open to the action of the Holy Spirit Who engenders in you good wishes and intentions and creates your personal faith.

It is faith above all that determined your choice and your life's path. In silent immersion into the mystery of the faith and in a soft blowing of grace you heard the call of God Who had chosen you, and Whose voice can be heard at all times. Your choice is a conscious act of professing the faith which is the primary and basic condition for affiliation with the Church. The faith and the Church have been intrinsically linked with each other throughout the entire history of Christianity, and in the crucial moment of the Evangelical history, profession of the apostolic faith coincides in time with the promise of Christ the Saviour about the Church. Asked by the Saviour, *But who do you say that I am?*, Christ's disciples professed Him as



*the Son of the living God* (Mt. 16.15-16; Mk. 8. 29; Lk. 9. 20; Acts, 13. 25). That was the time when the Lord first gave the community of His disciples the honourable and grand title of the Church, Ecclesia, which could be attributed only to a community of people possessing dignity and freedom. In their most profound meaning, dignity and freedom are granted to man through his faith in Christ, the Son of God, and therefore man's being in the faith and in the Church is his being in dignity and freedom.

From this it follows that a person's affiliation with the Church, his advancement in faith and his firm establishment in his moral dignity are inter-determining. Moreover, the prevalence of the moral over the rational-cognitive principle is as obvious as it is important, and this constitutes one of the fundamental principles of the life of the theological school as a whole. The inner treasures of spirit, Christian qualities of the soul, lofty moral virtues—honesty, sincerity, humility, generosity, meekness, faith and veneration—all these constitute a person's inestimable treasures and his greatest accomplishments. But these qualities are achieved through a much greater exertion of one's creative potential than in the process of an ordinary intellectual cognition, because the latter does not call for self-abnegation which is necessarily implied in the feat of faith.

The Church's lofty and solemn name contains an indication to the Christian feat of faith, which, with the help of God's grace, ensured the triumphant spread of the Church in the world. The Church is the greatest, perfect and absolute phenomenon in the life of the world. She is a living and ineffable mystery penetrating into the very depth of human soul and introducing it into a new grace-filled life.

Who are you, why did you come here, what are you called for—these are the questions you have to answer yourselves in order to be able to prepare yourselves freely and consciously, responsibly and purposefully for the great ministry which should be desired with your whole heart and which should be approached with trepidation and reverence.

From the moment the Lord Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to preach the Gospel among all peoples, the mission of bringing good news became paramount in the historical existence of the Church. The Lord came to the world to bring to it the eternal truth of God the Father and to usher people into a new life filled with Divine grace and love. The Lord handed over the mission of preaching the Gospel to His Church in which He is present by His grace and which brings salvation to each concrete person and mankind as a whole. The Holy Spirit guides the life of Christ's Church, inducting in Her pastors and bishops who are successors of the holy apostles. This time it is you who are being called to perform this lofty ministry. During entrance examinations you saw that many wanted to be in your place, but God chose you. Therefore you should prize your having been chosen; you should work on your own improvement, build up your inner spiritual life, imbibe the spirit of Orthodox churchiness, respect hierarchs; pride not upon your imaginary knowledge, carry out your duty modestly and conscientiously, love the theological school, be sincere, friendly, magnanimous; pray for our Fatherland now in the throes of dramatic upheavals, prepare yourselves for performing, within the limits of the ministry entrusted to you, your mission of bringing our people to the salvific and true faith, consecrating them with Divine grace and ushering people's souls into the world of imperishability and eternity.

Formerly, through your personal faith, you determined your affiliation with the Church, and now, in a new capacity as theological school students, you have bound yourselves with incomparably higher and more responsible obligations. Now you are being called to serve the Church with all your strength, your labour, natural gifts and talents, the knowledge you are going to acquire, your individual culture, your contemplation and prayerful feat. The period of your stay in the theological schools is the time of your preparation for the mission of bringing good news and of consecration, of service and witness. Loyalty to holy Orthodoxy, abidance by the apostolic and Holy Fathers' Tradition, canonical loyalty to the Russian Orthodox Church and love of our great Motherland—these should be the guidelines in your forthcoming ministry.

You know, of course, that false commissions and false prophets are now intruding into our land and disseminating their pernicious doctrines, revolting against the Orthodox Church, her hierarchs, establishments and traditions. Arrogantly alleging that they





*Bishop Filaret of Dmitrov heading the procession of teachers and students to the Trinity Cathedral for the traditional moleben at the beginning of the academic year*



are bringing the truth of Holy Scripture to the peoples of Russia, they are actually implanting harmful heresies and *denying the Lord that bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of... they are beguiling unstable souls... while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption... But the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgement to be punished* (2 Pet. 2.1, 14, 19, 9).

You, future ministers of the Orthodox Church, must also resist the onslaught of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, be guided by Tradition and practise a strict scientific-theological approach to the study and comprehension of the Holy Writ. The main element in the Church's mission of preaching the Gospel is the doctrine about the ways of achieving sanctity, spiritual improvement of the individual, his inner renewal, transfiguration and deification with the grace of the Holy Spirit in a new life in Christ.

Henceforth you are to study everything that concerns the Church's doctrine, her traditions and her mission of bringing good news. The Church addresses every person and, in the light of the Holy Writ, guides him in his attitude to his own existence, the surrounding world and God. The fullness of the Gospel preaching by the Church manifests itself in various forms, and all this variety of manifestations of the Church's existence now becomes the object of your study, contemplation and spiritual experience.

"Orthodoxy", says contemporary Bulgarian theologian, Bishop Nikolaj of Makariopol, "is not merely a doctrine, but life in God's way and in God. The Lord said: *they are spirit, and they are life* (Jn. 6.63). Therefore, the Christian doctrine on God, especially the Orthodox theology, should also be *spirit* and *life*, and not merely a theory. It should be rooted in faith (faith as a true profession of God and as unquestionable confidence in the existence of God) and life abundantly fecundate."<sup>2</sup>

Outlining the prospects and meaning of the pastoral and theological education and the future church service, we, in the awareness of our common involvement in the truth of Holy Orthodoxy, the destiny of Russia, and God's cause, are called upon to overcome our inertia and narrow-mindedness, our scarcity and our wildness, the lack of spirituality, our pride, our blind and cold indifference to everything lofty and sacred. Then, with God's help, we shall begin to muster moral and creative forces which are necessary for ensuring the advance and prosperity of our native theological science, spiritual and grace-filled parish life, our national religious and moral revival and renewal.

This is bound to come about in accordance with God's immutable plan. The ways of our coming revival are vague, and ineffable. But over us there is the unseen Most Pure Veil of the Most Holy Theotokos, and both this place and our Motherland are sanctified by the prayers of St. Sergy. Illuminated by his grace-giving light, encouraged by his daring hope, can we stay inert restraining our purposeful creative impulse? Penetrating ever deeper into the inexplicable mystery of our having been chosen, filled with bountiful Divine grace, let us strive to fulfil our lofty and responsible mission in the world. Realizing the fact that each of us is to embark on a great and exclusive path in this life and that there can be no worthier ministry on earth, on this momentous and solemn day we are invoking God's blessing on our coming labours in the new academic year.

#### NOTES

1. See: St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Works*, Vol. 1. St. Petersburg, pp. 563 and 645 (in Russian).

2. Nikolaj, Bishop of Makariopol. "Theology and Knowledge of God". *JMP*, 1972, No. 2, p. 69 (Russian edition).



## A Shrine Born Anew

### Moscow's Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and the 20th Century

People who came to Moscow's Red Square last year were amazed at the speed with which walls, vaults, kokoshniks and cupolas of a small handsome church were going up opposite the biggest department store, generally known as GUM. On November 4, 1993, the Feast of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, we witnessed the consecration of the church restored on the site of the old one. Built in 1636, the original church (pulled down in 1936) was dedicated to the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. This miracle-working icon, which accompanied Prince Dimitry Pozharsky in his campaigns, was ceremonially brought to Kitai-Gorod (a district in the centre of Moscow) on October 22, 1612, and began to be venerated as a protector and heavenly patron of Moscow.

The cathedral-memorial on the Red Square, symbolizing the victory over internal and foreign enemies, witnessed numerous events in the history of Russia. It saw terrible Moscow fires. Time was not clement to its ancient architecture—the old belfry and decorations were lost for ever...

The cathedral also saw the onset of the new Russian trouble. It was preceded by an event which shocked the Orthodox power: on June 29, 1904, the much-cherished shrine of the Russian people—the miracle-working Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, kept in the convent dedicated to this icon, was stolen.

This became a portent of great trouble—the first revolution of 1905-1907.

The 1917 revolution spelled hard times for the cathedral and all other Moscow churches and cloisters. In those October days shells flew past the church, hitting the Kremlin cathedrals, damaging and destroying frescoes and icons on the Nikolskaya (St. Nicholas) Tower.

Particularly tragic for the destinies of the Red Square shrines was the fact that since March 1918 the Kremlin, Russia's heart and sanctuary, became the residence of the atheistic Bolshevik government. In 1919 the chapels of St. Aleksandr Nevsky and St. Nicholas the Miracle Worker by the Nikolskiye Gate, which belonged to the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, were closed down. Just as the cathedral itself, these small chapels were of memorial significance being built in honour of the victory over Napoleon. In the 1920s a big fresco, depicting the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God (18th-19th cent.) and adorning the Nikolskaya Tower was destroyed by restorers' hands.

Thus, already at that time, the Red Square was bereft of the image of the Holy Liberator and Protectress of the capital of Russia. Then the atheists' hands reached to the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God as well—under a VTsIK (the All-Russia Central Executive Committee) decree, more than 30 silver icon rizas, 70 lampadas, a lot of silver church plate, weighing a total of 15 poods (one pood equals 16.38 kg.—Tr.) were taken out of the cathedral.

The authorities gradually went over to the destruction of Moscow chapels and churches. Memorial shrines, dear to the heart of every Russian, were being destroyed near the cathedral. In 1922 the

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This article is based on archive documents kept in the Central Municipal Archives of Moscow, the paper on the registration of the communique of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and its closure (reg. 1215, case 3, file 41), protocols of the Central State Restoration Shops (reg. P-1, files 11-16), protocols of the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet (reg. 150, case 3, file 369, etc.).—Auth.





*The Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Red Square prior to restoration  
1920s photo*

Chapel of St. Aleksandr Nevsky, erected in Tverskaya St. in memory of the warriors killed during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, was pulled down. The 1920s witnessed the destruction of the historic chapels by the Kremlin's Nikolskaya Tower. The first church to be pulled down in Moscow (in 1924) was the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple in Lubyanka St., where the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God was originally kept. In the summer of 1922 the atheists began the barbarian destruction of the huge church dedicated to St. Parasceve in Okhotny Ryad. This old church was not saved even by the fact that shortly before its destruction the restorers had discovered, under the coat of whitewash on its domes, marvellous tiles, and many prominent cultural figures came out in defence of the historical monument.

All these chapels and churches were situated near the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and were erected in honour of historical events, victories of the Russian arms. Few people know that prior to the construction of the Cathedral Church of Christ the

Saviour, the St. Parasceve Church was a kind of a memorial museum of the 1812 Patriotic War: it contained icons whose feast days coincided with the dates marking the Battle of Borodino, liberation of Moscow and Smolensk, the battle of Leipzig, etc. The Orthodox community of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God united people who lived in the Red Square, in Nikolskaya and Tverskaya streets. Many of its parishioners were workers or of the peasant stock. Among its members were many employees of the nearby Museum of History; there were also some representatives of the nobility (the Kalinovskys) and descendants of famous merchants (the Korzinkins). In the 1920s, the cathedral's dean was Father Vasily Metallov, professor at the Moscow Conservatoire, a well-known expert in church singing.

In the autumn of 1928, after the St. Parasceve Church was pulled down, the parish community of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God grew noticeably. The new amalgamated community got the name "The Orthodox Kazan Icon-St. Parasceve



Church Community at the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Moscow". The altars, antimensions and some particularly venerated icons that belonged to the St. Parasceve Church then being pulled down, were transferred to the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, which became a church commemorating two great events in the history of Russia—Moscow's liberation in 1612 and the victory in the Patriotic War of 1812.

In the mid-1920s the monument began to be restored on the funds raised by the religious community. Pyotr Baranovsky, then a young and energetic restorer, discovered remnants of kokoshniks, window casings and other old-time decorative elements under a thick layer of plaster. When in 1928 the money raised by parishioners ran out, the community, which wanted to see the restoration work completed, even asked for the big (190 poods) bell to be sold. And it was at that time that a veritable ordeal began for the cathedral. In January 1928 the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet passed a decision "On Pulling Down Some Church Structures Hampering Street Traffic". The belfry of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God was among the monuments doomed to destruction. Alas, Soviet restoration and museum workers gave their backing to this barbarian decision, alleging that the belfry of a later period spoiled the cathedral's ensemble. As far back as 1924, N. Trotskaya, head of the museum department, and I. Grabar, who was in charge of restoration workshops, came out in favour of "dismantling" the belfry.

Its pulling down coincided with the beginning of the dramatic change in the socio-political life of the country. The massive persecutions against the Church, the antireligious hysteria whipped up by the authorities, coupled with the fantastic ideas of the Moscow Soviet, meant the closure and inevitable destruction of many churches. One of the first hostages of this policy became the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God because the Red Square was being rapidly turned into the country's political centre, the site of grandiose popular demonstrations and military parades.

In August 1929, after a long secret correspondence, the VTsIK Presidium gave permission to pull down the famous Chapel



*The Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God with the refectory pulled down  
1936 photo*

of the Iviron Icon of the Mother of God, which contained this miracle-working icon venerated so much by Muscovites. And in May 1929 the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet, "in view of the fact that St. Basil's Church on the Red Square is a museum and that performance of religious rites in it presents considerable inconveniences; that the group of worshippers attending this church is small...", decided to close the cathedral down and turn it completely into a museum.

The Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God on the Red Square became the only functioning church in the centre of Moscow. A pretext was needed for closing it down, too. The local authorities recalled that as early as 1924 the director of the Museum of History, Shchekotov, asked the Moscow Soviet to hand over the building of the cathedral to the museum, "cancelling divine services in this parishless church".

Admitting the great services of Soviet museum workers in the field of protection and restoration of historical monuments, it is not amiss to say a few words about another, little-known aspect of the museum





*The Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God being pulled down*

1936 photo

policy of that time. Not infrequently museum workers acted as initiators and advocates of church closures. The Tretyakov Art Gallery actually "absorbed" the St. Nicholas Church in Tolmachi, the Museum of History—St. Basil's Cathedral, the Central State Restoration Workshops—the St. Nicholas Church in Bersenevka, the museum stock of the Moscow Department for Public Education—the Old Believers Church of the Dormition in Apukhtinka; the Kolomenskoye Museum—the neighbouring churches of the Ascension and of St. George... In 1929, the Department of Science of the Peoples Commissariat of Education of the RSFSR, which was in charge of museum work and protection of monuments, got the Moscow Soviet's decision to close down the remaining churches of the Epiphany Monastery, the Monastery of the Don Icon of the Mother of God and the Novodevichy Convent.

In the autumn of 1929, the Museum of History took the offensive, this time against the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, requesting the city authorities to close it down. The Moscow Soviet forwarded this request to the administra-

tive department which dealt with ecclesiastical affairs. The department leaders, Podchufarova and Yermakov, supported the museum's request and openly declared that "the cultic building standing at the corner of Nikolskaya St. and the Red Square creates great inconveniences during revolutionary festivities and demonstrations staged on the Red Square". The museum workers' claims were backed by the Department of Science.

The Moscow Soviet followed suite: by its decision of February 1, 1930, the Soviet's Presidium closed down the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and turned it over to the Department of Science to expand the premises of the Museum of History. In March, G. Smidovich, chairman of the Cults Commission at the VTsIK Presidium, informed the city authorities that their decision "had come into force".

May 13, 1930, when priest N. Rozhdestvensky handed over the keys from the church to a representative of the Moscow Administrative Department, became a black day for the cathedral. This was followed by the downright plunder of church property, usual for such cases. More than 30 kilos of rizas, icon settings, Gospels, tabernacles and other church plate were handed over to the state bank literally for a song, as scrap-silver. But not all church property went for utilization. On May 18, 1930, 72 items of artistic and historical value were officially turned over to A. Glazunov, representative of the museum stock. These included antique plates, a tabernacle (early 19th cent.), an aer, an oration (18th cent.), and part of the church archives. But most precious were 65 ancient icons, of course. The museum got all iconostasis icons: 12 icons from the prophets' tier (17th cent.), 12 icons from the deisus tier, 12 icons from the forefathers' tier (17th cent.), 14 icons from the festal tier (17th cent.), as well as the icon of Sts. Gury and Varsonofy of Kazan (17th cent.), which was particularly dear for the cathedral, etc.

Unfortunately, no documents indicating the museum which later received the icons from the cathedral are available at the moment. In all probability they were handed over to the Museum of History or the Tretyakov Art Gallery and are still in their reserves.

The cathedral's community joined the old Church of St. Nicholas in Khlynovsky





*The Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. After festal procession  
Postcard of the beginning of the 20th century*

Lane, near Bolshaya Nikitskaya Str. It was also to this church that worshippers brought part of the church plate, hierarchal vestments and several icons, including a copy of the famous Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. As for the St. Parasceve community, which amalgamated with that of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in 1928, it joined the community of the St. George Church in Bolshaya Dmitrovka St., bringing with them church vessels, crosses, a baptismal font, vestments and 33 icons.

Meanwhile, the situation on the Red Square was logically getting worse. In 1929-1930, opposite the monument to Minin and Pozharsky, yesterday's architect of Orthodox churches, A. Shchusev, was erecting a squat pagan-like mausoleum. The monument to the liberators of Moscow was moved behind the railing of St. Basil's Cathedral. The priceless old frescoes on the Spasskaya and Nikolskaya Towers were being painted over or effaced. In the summer of 1931, restoration work, then underway on the ancient Iviron Gate, was unexpectedly discontinued, and the city authorities ordered to pull it down to expand passage to the Red Square for demonstrators.

Clouds gathered also above the Cathedral

of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, which, thanks to the efforts of restoration workers, acquired its former splendour. But such cathedral, naturally, could not blend with the new aspect of the Red Square with its mausoleum, revolutionaries' necropolis and demonstrations. The authorities' intention to pull the cathedral down in 1932 was not carried into effect thanks to the firm stand taken by the restorers and due to the fact that in March 1933 the Moscow Soviet placed the cathedral at the disposal of the Metrostroï (Moscow underground building organization — *Tr.*), which was to open a workers canteen there. Actually, the canteen was being arranged in the cathedral's refectory, and the cathedral proper was divided into two storeys: the upper one housing a store, the ground floor—a kitchen. The western façade was spoiled by a brick chimney attached to it. But even under these unbearable conditions Pyotr Baranovsky and his helpers tried to restore the old porch, windows, and western and southern façades. However, very soon Baranovsky was arrested and exiled to Siberia. Having returned from exile he managed to take the necessary measurements of the cathedral.

The year 1936, terrible for Orthodox Moscow and its monuments, was approaching. It was in that year that many



masterpieces of the Moscow architecture — the Dormition Church in Pokrovka St., the Church of St. Nicholas in Stolpy, the Triumphal Gate, etc.— were mercilessly destroyed.

The history of the pulling down of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God is not yet quite clear. It is known that on July 21, 1936, the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet passed a decision on pulling down the cathedral and the buildings adjoining it. The authorities were in a hurry for some unknown reason: residents of these houses were given only ten days to vacate them and move to another place. The Metrostroi was obliged to urgently vacate the premises of the cathedral (from the early 1936 it housed a water-storage station of Mine No. 69). The cathedral and the adjoining buildings were to be dismantled not later than September 15, and 120,000 rubles were allocated for this purpose. The task was "admirably" coped with, and on October 1, 1936, the Moscow Soviet's Presidium was already discussing the question of asphaltting the ground on the site of the former church.

If we recall that the newly-built Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God with the side-chapel dedicated to St. Averky of Hieropol was consecrated by Patriarch Ioasaf of All Russia on October 16, 1636, we shall see that the

destruction of the great Orthodox shrine was timed to its 300th anniversary.

In its issue of April 19, 1937, the newspaper *Vechernyaya Moskva* (Evening Moscow) informed its readers that early in May an open-air summer café for 150 visitors and a fountain were to be commissioned at the crossing of October 25 St. and Istoricheskyy Proyezd. Not a word was said about the destroyed cathedral.

After the pulling down of the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God the campaign for destroying Moscow's Orthodox shrines began to abate. The history of this cathedral reflected in a way the destiny of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is highly symbolical, therefore, that the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God became the first Moscow shrine to have been restored in its former shape, dimensions, and on its former site.

The foundation ceremony took place in November 1990. Three years have passed and the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God has arisen on its former 17th-century foundation, adorning Moscow and its main and most beautiful square.

May God grant that the restored shrine help us overcome the current discord in Russia.

Vladimir KOZLOV

## Beneficent Aid

### (A Talk on the Sacrament of Anointment)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord Jesus Christ established seven sacraments in the Church for man to approach God on all important occasions in his life and receive a blessing and beneficent aid. The Sacrament of Anointment is meant to cure bodily and spiritual ailments. The Lord offers His healing grace through a priest who says a prayer seven times repeated and as many times anoints the ailing with the holy oil. It is natural and reasonable for us in our infirmities to turn to Christ for He is the life and health and joy, to the One without

Whose Will a single hair will not fall from our heads.

All goodness comes from God, but only if man turns himself to his Maker, and not the way one would to a physician thinking: let him do his business—all I have to do is to follow his advice and wait. The church Sacrament of Anointment is a meeting with the Lord for which one has to be prepared. Therefore this sacrament above the seven prayers, includes also seven Apostolic and seven Gospel readings the purpose of which is to open the soul of man for receiving Divine Grace.



The first Gospel reading is the parable of the Good Samaritan. He was the only one who had compassion on a traveller robbed and wounded by thieves, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The Good Samaritan is the Son of God Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who alone is the true Saviour and Healer of the suffering mankind. He came down from Heaven and, through His Sacrifice on the Cross, saved humanity crushed down by sin from eternal perdition. But even after he returned to Heaven, He did not leave us. The Samaritan of the parable, when he departed, gave money to the host and asked him to take care of the wounded man, and the Lord established priesthood entrusting it with the power to conduct sacraments to cure suffering people afflicted by sin. So, that is what we hear in the first Apostolic reading of the Sacrament of Anointment: *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him* (Jas. 5. 14-15). Even during the earthly life of the Lord the Holy Apostles anointed the sick with oil and cured them which is pointed to in the third Gospel reading of the Sacrament of Anointment.

So we, too, are preparing ourselves for the Sacrament of Anointment. We want the Lord to enter the abode of our soul and cure us. What should the state of our soul be? We find the answer in the second Gospel reading. It says: *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold* (Lk. 19.8). And the response was: *This day is salvation come to this house* (v. 9). Zacchaeus repented and gave a promise—and grace was granted unto him. The second prayer of the Sacrament invokes Divine Grace upon a man who acknowledges his sins. So we should realize our sinfulness and turn to God with a firm intention to become better, giving a promise, as Zacchaeus did, to make use of the strength and health He grants us in good, God-pleasing deeds, and to restore fourfold the one we have harmed.

The Apostolic readings of the Sacrament remind us of the sins we have to avoid and the virtues we have to strive for; of the fact that we are all members of the One Body of Christ, and should not have either envy, or pride or arrogance; that we should beware of any moral depravity and seek love, joy, peace, long-patience, piety, mercy, faith, humility and moderation, that we should help each other in the spirit of humbleness and share each other's hardships.

The name of our sins against these commandments is Legion. We are aware of but a minor part of the wrong we do and do not even consider a lot of it a sin. How great is the evil we have sown all around us voluntarily or involuntarily! And our ailments and infirmities are the result. We believe, however, that the Lord can forgive us through the prayers of the Church. Our faith is not in vain: would not the One Who made man cure him? The fourth reading tells us of how the Lord came to Apostle St. Peter's house and saw his wife's mother laid and sick of fever. It was enough for the Lord to touch her hand and the fever left her, and she rose (Mt. 8.15).

The might of the Lord is great, as great as His wisdom. He sees the soul of a man and knows how to save it. In the fourth reading we are told of two men who asked the Lord to let them stay with Him. The Lord did not bless one of them to do it, but would not allow the other to leave Him, even though the man had to bury his father. The Lord alone knows the way to salvation for every one of us. We must, therefore, fully submit to His Will, as children, and accept everything He may send down to us: He may cure one, grant to another the strength to bear his ailments, and, forgiving his sins, call the third to His Heavenly Kingdom. Whatever it might be, it will be an infinite mercy for us sinners.

In the fifth Apostolic reading of the Sacrament—the Epistle to the Corinthians—Apostle St. Paul, thinking of death, speaks of his boundless sorrow. However, we will not find in his words even a hint of protest or doubt in the righteousness of the Lord's judgement, only profound faith and humility: *...we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death*



*in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; ye also helping together by prayer for us (2 Cor. 1.8-11). The more so should we have the sentence of death in ourselves for our countless sins and wait for the Lord's judgement with humility, as did the wise maidens who blamed themselves with patience in wait of the coming Groom, as a woman of Canaan who would not leave Christ even when he put her faith to the test with His long silence.*

We should come to realize our sinfulness and inequity and deplore them, and Christ will not leave us for He said: *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick* (Mt. 9.12). If our faith is firm, we will be favoured with the beneficent aid of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the words of Apostle St. Paul: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Thess. 5.23). Amen.

Father VYACHESLAV REZNIKOV

## PASTOR AND THE FLOCK

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### VLADIMIR SMIRNOV, Archpriest of the Church of St. Elijah the Prophet in Obydensky Lane

In the 1960s-1970s, Moscow, which had abounded in churches in the not so distant past, could still boast of a few of them, whose outstanding priests attracted Moscow intellectuals by their broad erudition, penetration into their parishioners' spiritual needs, religious and prayerful experience. In the first place, this could be said about Father Vladimir Smirnov (1903-1981), an archpriest, who served in a small but extremely cosy Church of St. Elijah the Prophet, situated in Obydensky Lane, near Ostozhenka St., and hidden behind tall brick houses built in the early 1900s, it became a refuge for those who sought answers to "accursed problems" before the 1917 revolution, when among its priests were such remarkable persons as Father Vitaly Lukashevich (till 1935), then Father Aleksandr Tolgsky, both of whom were rectors of this church, and,

finally, Father Vladimir Smirnov, who served there under rector Father Nikolai Tikhomirov (†1987).

Father Vladimir, who went through a life's hard and profound spiritual school, was in a close spiritual communion with Father Nikolai Golubtsov, who died prematurely in the autumn of 1963, and many of this remarkable pastor's spiritual children became church charges of the former.

Among the parishioners of this church, there were many outstanding intellectuals, who sought answers to vital and crucial problems and spiritual assistance, sometimes coming in an endless queue onto the solea to meet with the priest not only prior to the divine service but also during and after it. Even outside the church, when the service was over, worshippers would follow Father Vladimir as sheep follow their shepherd.

This article tells the readers where and how the Lord reared this pastor and father. He was not a person of noble descent, but, as St. Paul the Apostle

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This article is an edited version of the author's talk with Father Vladimir tape-recorded in the summer of 1979.





situation was aggravated by family squabbling: Vladimir's mother was a very harsh and difficult person. His father died in 1910, leaving behind a widow with four children, Vladimir being the third child. At the time of his father's death he was only five years old. The family was in dire straits. True, some help came from Vladimir's God-father, Aleksei Andreyevich, a psalm reader at a nearby church, who showed concern for his God-son and wanted to get him into a theological school, but failed to do this because of class restrictions. Vladimir finished the Odintsovo primary (four-year) school with flying colours.

His childhood was marked by an event which had a decisive influence on all his subsequent life. When he was three or four years old, he underwent a surgical operation on his leg. The operation was unsuccessful: the boy became an invalid. He could walk only on crutches and therefore hardly ever left his home. "In winter I usually lay on the brick stove in a new house (built after the fire)", Father Vladimir recalls. "I couldn't walk and had no friends; my only friends were St. Sergy, St. Nicholas... This is how I grew up..."

Still he was placed in the above-mentioned Odintsovo school. In 1913, to participate in the solemn ceremony of the canonization of St. Yermogen thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Russia flocked to the Moscow Kremlin. A group of Odintsovo school pupils, headed by their teacher, decided to join them. Vladimir tagged after his classmates on crutches. And here they are in the Kremlin. An enormous queue is winding its way on the square, with people waiting for their turn to enter the Dormition Cathedral and kiss the reliquary containing the relics of the saint. It took more than one day to reach the reliquary in that queue, yet there was an option: one could get into the cathedral through another entrance and bow to the relics from a distance. This is what the teacher did with her schoolchildren. It is hard to tell how the boy wanted her to lead him, an invalid, up to the relics and to get healed. Especially after those standing in the queue saw how a very sick man, shrieking with pain, was brought on stretchers to the relics, where he suddenly quietened down. Vladimir cried bitterly, entreating his teacher, but the

said, *...God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence... (1 Cor. 1.27-29).*

The future archpriest's father came of peasant stock; he lived in the small town of Odintsovo outside Moscow, worked as a greaser and train coupler at the local railway. In addition, he was quite at home in shoemaking, and after giving up his work at the railway, became the owner of a small shoemaker's shop. The range of his interests was rather modest—he was fond of gambling and spent his spare time playing cards. Vladimir's mother decided to engage in "business", opening a small booth and, a few years later, something like a tavern. Father gave up his hard work and began to help his wife, trading and travelling to and from fairs. The parents got rather rich, but their neighbours set fire to their house. During the fire the family property was plundered. This misfortune had an oppressive effect on the father who took to drinking. The



latter did not venture to break the established order. The boy was terribly upset: all he could do was, with tears in his eyes, ask the holy hierarch to heal him from a distance.

When he woke up on the following day, the boy felt he was almost completely whole... He did not need crutches any more. This event became imprinted on Vladimir's mind for ever, and determined, although not overnight, his desire and striving to serve God.

In the meantime his stepfather (in 1915 Vladimir's mother married for a second time) placed the boy in a shoemaker's shop to repair shoes: he had to earn his living and not even dream of continuing his education.

The teacher felt sorry for her pupil and managed to persuade the stepfather to send Vladimir to Moscow to attend Rostovtsev's commercial school. The local priest gave money for the boy's tuition. Vladimir attended this school for less than a year because in the spring of 1917 the stepfather went to work as a railway guard and had to leave for Minsk together with the whole family. In Minsk Vladimir entered a private gymnasium which he attended for the whole winter, but in the following spring the family returned to Odintsovo, where he finished school, entered the Moscow Railway Secondary School and then the Institute of Railway Engineers, but subsequently had to leave it because his stepfather deserted the family, and the young man had to take up a hard and low-paid job at a brickworks to be able to support the family. Soon he received a letter from his fellow-girl student, who invited Vladimir to Samara where he could get a good job, as her father held a good post at the local railway. Vladimir accepted the invitation and spent the whole winter of 1925-1926 in Samara, then went to his mother for Easter and stayed with her, working at the local house-maintenance office.

The early 1920s were marked by two major events in Vladimir's life, which intensified the religious feeling of the young man, who preserved his firm faith in God since childhood. The first of them occurred soon after Vladimir finished school: the death of a nephew of factory-owner Sheikin, with whose children he was very close since school days. The question whether or not there was life beyond the grave arose in all its acuteness

before the youngsters who were shaken by the premature death of their friend, and they decided to discuss this problem with their school teacher of physics and mathematics, a believer, Y. Nadezhdin, former professor at the Nizhni Novgorod University, who knew more than ten foreign languages. The talk they had with this man was extremely interesting and left an indelible impression on the young man's soul.

The second event was acquaintance with a young man who showed keen interest in religion and who took Vladimir to the St. Peter Monastery, when it was headed by Bishop Varfolomei. Vladimir found the mode of life in that monastery very much to his liking and often spent his leisure time there, serving as an attendant and subdeacon and acquiring the rudiments of theological education. Living at the St. Peter Monastery at that time was a group of monks from the closed-down St. Zosima Hermitage (Arsaki Station): Hierodeacon Nikita, who later became archimandrite in the St. Peter Monastery; Hieromonk Zosima, German Polyansky, a relative of the rector of the Annunciation Church in Berezhki, and others, including Archimandrite Agafon, who, seeking stricter monastic life, left the Sviyaga Monastery and came to stay in St. Zosima's Hermitage, where he fulfilled the obedience of a veterinary. Vladimir became particularly attached to this starets, and it is to him that he usually went for confession. Under his influence Vladimir became attracted to monasticism. This feeling was promoted by his visits, together with his friend Ivan, to Paraclete to Hieromonk Agafodor. For nearly ten years Vladimir Smirnov was in a regular communion with the brethren of the St. Peter Monastery, spending almost all his spare time there. Once, when he came to the monastery, he was seized together with the monks and thrown into the Butyrskaya prison, and a month after exiled for three years, first to Vologda and then to Kotlas and Syktyvkar for "free settlement". At first this life in exile was unbearable, indeed, because he could not find a job anywhere, then he began to work in a truck-garden and some time later at the construction of a pulp-and-paper mill in the village of Izmag, some 50 kilometres from Syktyvkar. Upon the expiration of the term of exile Vladimir returned to Syktyvkar, but the NKVD did not let him



go home. He began to lose heart because he had nothing to live on.

The poor young man, who ran the risk of dying of malnutrition and disease in the north, was comforted by Father Luka, a wonderful, kind-hearted and sagacious priest, who told him: "Don't worry, you will not die, you are sure to get well. Wait a bit, the Feast of the Annunciation will come soon, you will receive Holy Communion, go to the OGPU, knock at the window, they will give you your papers and you will go home."

And, indeed, after Extreme Unction he got well and soon after the Feast of the Annunciation was allowed to leave for his native parts, while a whole group of exiles, headed by German Ryashentsev, precentor of the church choir in the village of Izmaga, was detained for an indefinite time.

Back in Moscow, Vladimir began to look for a job, which he could not get as he had no official residence registration. And so he decided to go to work at the construction of the Moscow-Minsk Railway then being carried out under the NKVD supervision, and settled in Golitsino, outside Moscow, where he stayed for half a year, until he got an invitation from Boris Utkin, a future priest, with whom he had made friends at the St. Peter Monastery (he was a subdeacon there), and took up a job at the Botkin Hospital construction project in Koptevo.

It was here, in Koptevo, that Vladimir married (in 1938) Zinaida Pashkevich, a daughter of a Moscow barrister of Polish extraction. The wedding ceremony took place in the St. Filipp Church in Meshchanskaya Street, on July 27, 1938.

Soon afterwards Vladimir went to work at the construction of a summer cottage community near Skhodnya Station; he moved to the project's office, which later became his home for thirty years.

When the project was completed, they moved to a new construction site in Kuchino, but soon the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) broke out, and Vladimir was mobilized.

He found himself at the fighting front near Smolensk, and in the second engagement was severely wounded—a perforating wound in the bridge of the nose, right near the eyes, resulting in complete blindness. Vladimir was urgently taken to hospital first in Moscow and then in Gorky (now Nizhni Novgorod again), where he spent nearly half a

year. Glory be to God, he recovered his sight, but traces of the wound remained on his face till the end of his life. Smirnov got a "white card", i. e. was pronounced unfit for active military service, and placed at the disposal of the local district military committee. The latter assigned him to work at a hospital and then at a bread-baking plant as a store keeper. The end of the war found him working in the same capacity at a housing project in Moscow.

After the war Vladimir got into a scrape again.

One of his former chiefs was accused of embezzlement, and in the process of the investigation Vladimir was made a witness. A sentence threatened him; he needed a counsel for the defence but had no money to hire one.

One pious woman advised him to go to the Novodevichy Convent (where theological schools were located at the time and demand for religious books was high), sell some of his books and thus obtain some money. Vladimir followed the advice and went to the convent where he got to know Father Aleksandr Vetelev. This meeting was providential for Vladimir. The life of fuss and vanity had long been oppressive to him, and Father Aleksandr offered him to become his psalm reader. Vladimir agreed to this proposal but warned the priest about the sentence threatening him. Indeed, he was soon sentenced to a three-year exile. He spent a month near Kotlas in the north-west of the country, and after Stalin's death was amnestied. As soon as he returned home, Vladimir went to the Novodevichy Convent and finally made up his mind to devote himself to the service to the Holy Church.

Father Aleksandr took to him and wanted to make him a deacon. He wrote a relevant request to His Holiness, whose answer was favourable, but soon Father Aleksandr was transferred to another church and his successor, Father Valerian Nikolayev, was reluctant to lose such a fine psalm reader as Vladimir Smirnov, on the one hand, and on the other, Archdeacon Father Pyotr Zverev, who served at the church was a professional singer. "You're no match to Father Pyotr as a deacon", Father Valerian told Vladimir Smirnov. "But this is Father Aleksandr's will, not mine", Vladimir replied meekly, who got used to the idea of becoming a server of the Church in



Holy Orders. Father Ioann Potapov, who served at the Novodevichy Convent at that time, tried to comfort his spiritual son as best as he could. But Father Aleksandr decided to persuade his friend, Archpriest Aleksandr Tolgsky, who was then the rector of the Church of St. Elijah, to take Vladimir Smirnov as an assistant to elderly archdeacon Nikolai Orfeyev. He sent a special letter to Father Aleksandr, who refused even to take it, saying: "I have my own candidate!" But a few days later, during All-Night Vigil conducted on the eve of the Feast of the Icon of the Mother of God "Joy Unhoped-for", Vladimir was told that he was to be ordained deacon during Liturgy on the following day.

Indeed, Archbishop Makary Dayev ordained him deacon of the Church of St. Elijah in Obydensky Lane where, under the guidance of Father Aleksandr Tolgsky, he served for nearly ten years until the latter's death.

Father Aleksandr Tolgsky took to his new deacon and did not want to invite any archdeacon to his church. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy often served in this church without his archdeacon, evidently considering that Father Vladimir's service was quite good for a patriarchal service.

Clergymen's ministry in this church was calm and peaceful under the guidance of Father Aleksandr Tolgsky (†1962), and then Father Nikolai Tikhomirov (†1982). After the demise of Father Aleksandr Tolgsky, who had served for 26 years in this church, Father Vladimir submitted a petition to His Holiness the Patriarch, requesting the Primate of the Church to ordain him priest. His request was immediately granted: on April 22, 1962, this being Palm Sunday, Father Vladimir became priest.

Father Vladimir's inner tranquillity, reliance on God's will, humility, concern for people and their spiritual requirements, prompt responsiveness to their requests, coupled with complete disinterestedness and selflessness, attracted numerous worshippers who sought his pastoral guidance and consolation in grief and troubles.

The external aspect of his service was remarkable for its natural simplicity and the penetrating quality of his rich and mellow baritone.

Performing his pastoral ministry, Father Vladimir was always mindful of the

religious needs of his numerous children whom he used to meet on the solea, whose confessions he heard and whom he consoled. He never finished a seminary but was well read and versed in theological questions, so much so that few academy graduates could boast of such knowledge. Moreover, his scope as a pastor and the breadth of his views attracted to him people of varying affiliations and world views.

Years passed. As before Father Vladimir often went to Skhodnya Station where he had a half of a cottage and a small garden at his disposal. After late services, when he had to come to the church on the following morning, a bed was made for him in the baptistry.

Mother Zinovia, who for many years coped with the numerous duties of a sanctuary attendant, came to the church at five in the morning. She was soon followed by Father Vladimir who began to conduct the Proskomide, prayerfully remembering his numerous spiritual children, those who were still alive and those who had departed. As a rule, he began the Proskomide an hour and a half before the actual divine service. He was gradually joined by diligent and zealous singers and readers, enthusiasts, church service zealots, members of the choir, singing at the early Sunday Liturgy or on ferial days.

In the early 1970s, Father Vladimir, his wife Zinaida and their son had to leave their home in Skhodnya and move to Lyubertsy, because somebody needed their house where they had lived for so many years. This was the first trial.

The second occurred in the mid-1970s on the Feast of the Lord's Baptism; taking a bus, the priest slipped, and his leg got under a wheel. A serious injury left its mark for the rest of his life.

The next blow was the death of Mother Zinovia, a faithful associate, helper and co-prayer, and a solicitous friend not only of Father Vladimir but also of all his colleagues.

And, finally, in the summer of 1978, he had a stroke, making him an invalid. Soon, however, Father Vladimir got better a little and became able to move slowly, but he could not stand on his feet for a long time. Thanks be to God that his speech was not impaired. He had to resign.

Resigning himself to God's will, Father Vladimir bore his cross submissively: he



had to stay at home, far away from his church, which now he could attend only on great feasts, several times a year. This "confinement" was made easier by the solicitous care of his wife, visits of his son, grandson and spiritual children, and life in the summer cottage. In May 1981 he was eagerly waiting for this chance to come, but in vain. His strength was ebbing away, he took to his bed never to get up. On the evening of June 1 (at about 9 p. m.) his loving heart, which had enough room for joys and sorrows of his numerous spiritual flock, ceased to beat. The good, knowledgeable and pious pastor passed away. On June 3, the coffin with the body of the deceased priest was brought to the church where he served for a quarter of a century. Father Vladimir Vorobyov, one of the spiritual sons of the deceased, conducted a panikhida.

The funeral service was held after later Liturgy on June 4, the Feast of the Ascension. Among those who came to the church to pay last respects to the deceased pastor was His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk, who loved and respected Father Vladimir. The funeral service was conducted by the church clergy, with Father Nikolai, rector of the church, at their head.

Among those who attended the funeral service and came to pay their last respects to the deceased pastor were his former spiritual children and those who were near and dear to him, Archpriest Nikolai Vedernikov, priests Father Kirill Chernetsky, Father Sergy Brdzyka and others. Nine priests and five deacons took part in the funeral office.

Father Sergy Brdzyka, who served in the St. Elijah Church together with Father Vladimir for several years, delivered a moving funeral oration: "Conducting divine services with great thoroughness", he said, "Father Vladimir strictly abided by the Statute and prayed ardently and from the bottom of his heart. In particular, he prayed for his near ones, always fulfilling the requests of those who asked him to pray for their health or for the repose of the dead, or to share some sorrow or grief.

"He was a preacher, who preached the word of God not only during divine services but also during various church offices. Many remember the words he said at funeral services, weddings, divine services and also after them. He strove to bring people to the Lord and was a great guardian of people's souls. He devoted a great deal of strength and time—more than he could afford, perhaps—to the spiritual guidance of this flock. Assisted by his numerous spiritual children, he helped the lonely, sick, needy, doing this wisely and tactfully. This life of self-abnegation and complete dedication sapped his strength, of course... And now we are saying 'Farewell' to Father Vladimir as a good pastor...".

To the singing of the hirmoi of the canon of Great Saturday the coffin with the body of the deceased was carried round the church. Father Vladimir was buried in the Vagankovskoye Cemetery.

Memory eternal to you, good and loving father and teacher!

May your soul dwell with the righteous!

S. GOLUBTSOV



### For His Friends

*...Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it (Mk. 8. 35)*

Evidently, the news of the outbreak of war came as a deep shock for Stalin, making him realize man's uselessness, experience in full measure the hitherto unknown feeling of helplessness and defencelessness. "Waste no time on doubting about yourselves", the inner voice kept repeating to him almost daily the words of rebel Mikhail Bakunin. Yet Stalin spent almost two weeks on this "vanest business of all", entrusting to Molotov to tell the country what he was to do himself as the "father and leader of all times and nations".

As a rule, reports about losses at the front and the Red Army's retreat were received by Stalin with a gloomy face, without any visible emotions, and when one day Molotov mentioned casually that on June 26 the Patriarchal Locum Tenens Metropolitan Sergy of Moscow and Kolonna addressed the congregation in the Moscow Cathedral with a speech, blessed Orthodox believers and conducted a moleben "for granting victory to the Russian arms", he regained consciousness for a short period after this shock. Complaisant Beria took a sheet of paper out of his sinister folder and put it on the table before Stalin. It was a message "To the Pastors and the Flock of Christ's Orthodox Church", written by Metropolitan Sergy on the first day of the war and distributed among parishes.

"In recent years, we, residents of Russia, have been consoling ourselves with the hope that our country will manage to avoid the military conflagration which has swept almost the entire world, but fascism, which recognizes only brute force as law and which has got accustomed to mock at lofty standards of honour and morality, was true to itself again. The Nazi brigands have attacked our country. Trampling upon all treaties and violating their promises, they suddenly pounced on us, and now our native land is already being covered with the blood of peaceful

citizens. The time of Batu, German knights, Charles of Sweden and Napoleon has come again. The miserable descendants of the enemies of Orthodox Christianity are going to try again to bring our people to their knees before injustice and by sheer violence to force them to sacrifice the good and integrity of their homeland and the vital behests of love for their Motherland.

"It is not for the first time that the Russian people face such trials. With God's help, they will put the enemy to complete rout again. Our ancestors did not lose heart when they found themselves even in a more difficult situation, because they were mindful not of personal gains and dangers but of their sacred duty to the Motherland and faith, and emerged victorious. Let us, Orthodox people, who are their kins in blood and faith, not put their glorious names to shame. The Motherland defends itself by means of weapons and by people's heroic feat, by their readiness to serve their native land at its hour of trials as best they can. Workers, peasants, scientists, men and women, young and old people — all can and must make their contribution to the common feat by their labour, their concerns and their art.

"Let us recall the saintly leaders of the Russian people such as Aleksandr Nevsky; Dmitry Donskoi, who laid down their lives for their people and country. And this is true not only of leaders. We should recall the countless thousands of ordinary Orthodox warriors, whose names are not known and whom Russian people immortalized in their glorious folk epics under the names of giants: Ilya Muromets, Dobrynia Nikitich and Alyosha Popovich...

"Our Orthodox Church has always shared the destinies of the people, their trials and successes. Neither shall she leave her people this time. She gives her heavenly blessing to the coming feat of the whole people.

We, more than anyone else, should



remember Christ's commandment: *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends* (Jn. 15. 13).

"At the time when our Motherland is calling all of us for a feat, we, pastors of the Church, should not be merely passive observers of what is going on around us; we should encourage those who have lost heart, comfort the grieving, and remind the vacillating about their duty and God's will. And if the pastor's passiveness and non-involvement in the tribulations of their flock are explained by his arch considerations linked with possible profits beyond the border, this will mean a downright betrayal of his native country and pastoral duty, inasmuch as the Church needs a pastor who performs his ministry really 'for the sake of Christ, and not for the sake of a piece of bread', to quote the holy hierarch Dimitry of Rostov. Let us lay down our lives together with our flock.

"Thousands upon thousands of our Orthodox warriors followed the road of self-abnegation, laying down their lives for their native country whenever it was invaded by enemies. They died, never thinking about glory and fame; their only thought was that their country needed their sacrifice and they meekly sacrificed everything, including their lives.

"The Christ's Church is blessing all Orthodox people for the defence of the sacred borders of our country.

"The Lord will grant us victory."

What did the would-be priest Dzhugashvili recall when he read the message? The lines from the Holy Scripture about the end of the world, the coming of the anti-christ who threatened to destroy the human race? The long evenings he spent in his youth, reading the Old and New Testaments by the flicker of lampadas, the books which could help him apprehend the truth? Or, perhaps, he finally realized the need to achieve rapprochement with the Orthodox Church which had suffered so much from the Soviet government? We can only hazard conjectures about Stalin's thoughts, but it was beyond all doubt that the Patriarchal Locum Tenens forestalled him with the public statement, and this could spell unpredictable consequences for the Primate of the Church.

After the October Revolution militant atheists closely followed the Orthodox Church, giving short shrift to hundreds of disagreeable seekers of the truth. But

the ways of the fathers of the Russian Orthodox Church also parted. The split occurred not through their own fault. A label of compromisers with the theomachist authorities was pinned on those who remained in Russia, in spite of the spiritual torments they had to suffer in their attempts to preserve the legality of the Church's existence.

But this time the potentate's wrath was not destined to be given vent to.

Metropolitan Sergy continued to head the Church. Henceforth he could perform his great mission of uniting Orthodox worshippers unhindered, and many of the ideas and words contained in his message could be found in Stalin's well-known speeches delivered on July 2 (over the radio) and on November 7 (from the Lenin Mausoleum)...

"War is a sacred thing for those who resort to it out of necessity, in defence of justice and truth", Metropolitan Aleksy of Leningrad said in his address to believers. "Even in this case, those who take up arms perform a heroic feat... and, receiving wounds, going through sufferings and, laying down their lives for their consanguineous ones, for their native land, they follow the road of martyrs to gain the undecaying, eternal wreath."

As for the Patriarchal Locum Tenens, Metropolitan Sergy, he issued three more addresses to the clergy and parishioners, explaining to them the true meaning of the events and branding Nazism with ignominy. The messages were full of faith in God, Who, "as before, will not leave us and will grant us the final victory".

Undoubtedly, this victory was being forged at the fighting front, where, careless of their lives, Red Army men performed their military duty; it was also being brought nearer by the strenuous efforts of workers at the home front, who created unsurpassed weapons and other military equipment. The nation's endeavours to bring about an early victory were cemented by the hard and dedicated work of the peasantry. But there was one more major factor whose might and potency cannot be expressed in qualitative terms—the Orthodox faith.

There was no end to the tricks which the latter-day "fathers of the motherland" resorted to in an attempt to crush in Russian people the spiritual pivot rooted in the past centuries, to poison people's minds in order to erase from them the images of the Maker and Jesus; they used barbarous



methods to spoil and destroy what had been produced by the creative genius and endeavour of generations; they subjected church people and laymen loyal to the Church to inhuman tortures. But home-bred inquisitors were unable to break people's great and indomitable spirit: as before, icons and lampadas could be seen in their homes, without the authorities' knowledge and secretly from mercenary spies parents baptized their babies, newly-weds received the Church's blessing for their life's path together, and those who completed it to the singing of "O Lord, repose their souls with the saints", were committed to earth, commanding the living to protect it...

With the name of God fighting men launched attacks against the enemy and they recalled Him at their death-hour. His name brought a warming faith in victory, and in their hardest days of tribulation people turned to His Image, seeking consolation, and came to it for confession in their grief.

The universal misfortune united believers, making them forget wrongs and insults, and gave rise to a nation-wide patriotic upsurge. Acting on behalf of the Orthodox Church, her Primate warned that "every one who betrays the cause of the whole people and sides with the Nazis, as the enemy of the Lord's Cross, shall be excommunicated from the Church and a bishop or ordinary cleric defrocked".

Just as severe church condemnation awaited those who broke the laws of the Motherland. Their complicity with the enemy was regarded as "complete betrayal of Christianity itself".

Using pseudo-Christian phraseology (every German soldier had a buckle with an inscription: "God is with us") as a cover, Hitler shouted all over the world about the need to spatch the Church out of the Bolsheviks' hands. But if we bear in mind that the Nazis accepted Nietzsche's philosophy in its entirety, one can easily see the flagrant lie in these allegations. The founder of the theory of a superman qualified Christian virtues—compassion, love of one's neighbour, humility and mercy—as plebeian, curbing man's passions and extinguishing his ability to overcome himself in his ascent to the highest stage.

In November 1941 Wehrmacht's blows were spearheaded against Moscow. The words said at that time by Anna Tsivina, a member of the parish council at the Dormition Church in Gonchary (Moscow),

were firmly impressed on the memory of her contemporaries. Donating her savings, she said: "We should not grudge anything for the army which defends our native land."

At all times unselfishness has been a distinguishing virtue of a religious Russian man, and Moscow priests were among the first to prove this by their contributions to the national victory fund. Responding to the call of Father Vasily Romanov, rector of the church at the Pyatnitskoye Cemetery, parishioners collected warm clothes for Red Army men and more than 500,000 rubles. When the enemy hurled leaden hails upon Moscow, many clergymen, defying mortal danger, went to where they were needed most at the moment. During Nazi air raids, the fire-prevention squad in the area around the Resurrection Church in Bryusovsky Lane was headed by Father Nikolai Bazhanov, rector of this church. The medal "For the Defence of Moscow" Father Nikolai was decorated with on October 6, 1944, is a graphic testimony of the courage he displayed during the hard months of fighting for the capital city. It is simply impossible to count the number of incendiary bombs put out or otherwise rendered harmless by fire-prevention squads during this time, the number of houses and other buildings they saved from fire, and the number of Muscovites they helped.

Among the priests decorated for similar feats were Nikolai Kolchitsky, Pavel Uspensky, Pavel Tsvetkov, Mikhail Kuznetsov, Vyacheslav Sollertinsky, Pavel Lepyokhin, Fyodor Kazansky and Pyotr Turbin. Orthodox Church historians have yet to tell us about them.

The name of the small township of Troitsky Pogost in the Kalinin (now Tver, again) Region became lost in the numerous communiques of the Supreme High Command, yet it is this name that reflected, as in a clear well, Russia's pain and torments.

It is hardly likely that the commander of the infantry battalion, assigned to defend this township, which had its headquarters in the stone Church of the Holy Trinity, knew that he was fighting for Russia's memory which these quiet places around the Istra preserved so solicitously. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the cathedral dean, Father Aleksandr Smorodinov, with whose permission the battalion's staff was quartered in the church, told its men and officers that they were defending old Russian shrines... That St. Sergy of Radonezh,

whose name was for ever associated with the fame and glory of Russian arms, had stopped at this place en route to his disciple, St. Savva of Zvenigorod... That more than once in the years of great discord, Moscow troops repelled Lithuanians' raids on the banks of the Istra... That in the person of young Tsar Peter, young Russia won here what may be called one of the major victories over the forces of Tsarevna Sofia and, finally, that during the Patriotic War of 1812 the French invaders got it at Troitsky Pogost.

A little above the battalion's command post was the sanctuary which had an icon of the Mother of God "Consolation of All the Afflicted". In times of yore it belonged to Prince Vsevolod Yaroslavich, grandson of Prince Aleksandr Nevsky, and was venerated as one of the main shrines of the church parish, whose peaceful life was disturbed by the war.

The war announced its onset by the clanking of the tracks of German panzers and the booming of guns. Bitter frost, which bound impassable swamps and country roads in ice, enabled the Nazis to effect a breakthrough from the town of Ruza to Troitsky Pogost. The local population took refuge in two churches, both dedicated to the Holy Trinity—a stone one, erected in the 20th century and a wooden one built in the pre-Petrine period. In both of these churches lampadas were burning under icons, and people were praying for salvation.

Street fighting was fierce and shortlived. Its outcome was predetermined by the scantiness of the township's defenders. Moreover, the Red Army men ran out of ammunition. The Nazis drove wounded and unarmed soldiers together and made short work of them before the local residents' very eyes. Father Aleksandr conducted a panikhida for the repose of the killed soldiers' souls, and at night, together with some of his helpers, buried them according to the Orthodox rite. At dawn, when he made a round of the churches, he was surprised to find out that the many-hour fierce shelling did not cause any serious damage to the two structures. Moreover, and it was a particularly surprising thing, the wooden church was absolutely unharmed. Recalling November 26, an eyewitness said that "fiery shreds of shells flew past the church, leaving it intact".

Fourteen shells hit the stone church, and four of them were found unexploded. The icons of the Mother of God and the Saviour

survived. A bullet hole was gaping on the palm of St. Nicholas's left hand, under the sword which he held in the right hand, protecting the Church. No harm was done to the carved oak iconostasis with an icon of St. Sergy of Radonezh, which bore an inscription: "O Lord, guard and protect this holy place".

The Nazis stayed for two weeks in the township, and all this time its residents remained in the two churches. Father Aleksandr conducted molebens, making short intervals. The worshippers' stoicism could not but be noticed by the township commandant as an incomprehensible and inexplicable phenomenon, and he invited a German pastor to see it for himself. Throwing a contemptuous and bewildered glance over the crowd of people, who humbly bowed their heads before icons, the pastor barked out something to the commandant and waved his hand in a mysterious gesture. Father Aleksandr could not unravel the meaning of this gesture, but in the evening he found out that the stocks of communion wine and candles had gone in the wooden church. The priceless iconostasis was punctured by bullet holes from one end to another.

On December 9, the Nazis drove all surviving Troitsky Pogost residents together in the church basement and were about to blow it up. Pressed by the Soviet armed forces, they had to leave the township in haste, setting it on fire. The churches survived in this sea of fire and smoke, and the residents were released from the Nazi monsters' captivity. On December 11 the boom of cannonade began to recede westward, and the units of the 16th Army of the Western Front, which assumed the offensive, moved through Troitsky Pogost in pursuit of the retreating enemy. The army was commanded by General Konstantin Rokossovsky. The celebrated general, who had seen much during his military career, was perplexed: amidst numerous sites of fire he saw two churches, which survived by miracle. The men and officers met Rokossovsky's request about a careful attitude to Christian shrines and left Troitsky Pogost with a feeling of gratitude for the warmth they had granted them in the fierce cold of the memorable December of 1941. It was precisely in December that the myth about the invincibility of the Nazi army was exploded.

During a solemn divine service, conducted in the survived stone Church of the Holy Trinity, Father Aleksandr Smorodi-



nov addressed the congregation—residents of the no longer existing township—with Solomon's moving words.

Tears welled up in the eyes of the people, who had been within a hairbreadth of death, whose road was blocked by the Orthodox faith as by an unseen barrier. Regrettably, even this faith was unable to preserve the hundreds of churches and monasteries of Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia which were reduced to ashes and rubble. Until September 23, 1941, the magnificent creation of Peter the Great and his successors—Novy Peterhof, outside Leningrad—took pride in its five handsome churches. After its capture by the Germans none of them survived. Nearly two thousand believers gathered in the vast Church of the Trinity. The Nazis knew this and concentrated their fire on this shrine, which collapsed, becoming a common grave for its faithful parishioners.

One cannot but be chilled with horror, reading reports about the atrocities perpetrated by the Hitlerites on occupied territories, about executions of and repressions against clergymen, the ordeals suffered by believers and about mass desecration of churches. Nevertheless they do not give cause for doubts about the ultimate victorious outcome of the war, let alone testify to confusion or loss of hope.

September 1943 witnessed a significant event in the life of the Russian Orthodox Church. On September 8, the highest hierarchs of Russia gathered in the assembly hall of the Moscow Patriarchate to elect the Patriarch. Shortly before that event the Patriarchal Locum Tenens, Metropolitan Sergy, Metropolitan Aleksy of Leningrad and Novgorod, and Metropolitan Nikolai of Krutitsy, Exarch to the Ukraine, had been received by Stalin and Molotov. At this meeting the metropolitans informed the Soviet leaders of the intention to hold a Bishops' Council, which would elect a patriarch. A short article published in *Izvestia* on September 5, 1943, said that "the head of government Comrade J. V. Stalin showed a sympathetic attitude to these proposals and declared that the government would not raise any obstacles to this".

For seventeen years (1927-1943) the duties of the Head of the Church were performed by Metropolitan Sergy (secular name Ivan Nikolayevich Stragorodsky) of Moscow and Kolomna. A naval priest in the past and an ardent patriot of Russia, he did not abandon his country in the

years of great trials. He faced staunchly and courageously the baiting and bitterness of numerous losses among his colleagues-clergymen, overcame persecutions against the Orthodox Church and stood up to the bitter struggle against schismatics.

The episcopate was unanimous in its opinion, and to the exclamation of "Axios!" Metropolitan Sergy was approved as the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. At the same time, the Holy Synod was re-established.

The news of the election of the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church stirred the whole world. Messages of greetings and congratulations came to His Holiness Patriarch Sergy in an endless stream.

The response to the election of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia was rather peculiar in the Berlin imperial chancellery, the den of Nazism. Nazist leaders were familiar with the messages addressed by Metropolitan Sergy to believers, which provoked their irritation and torrents of billingsgate language. And no wonder! In them Hitler was likened to Herod. As we know, Herod did not escape punishment for his cruelty and brutality: he met his end in a filthy pit where he rotted alive.

In the West, reaction to the election of the Patriarch was ambivalent, ranging from enthusiastic to sharply critical. The critique was based on the official opinion: "by approving the step taken by the Orthodox clergy, the Soviet government testified to their weakness and appealed to the forces of the other world for help".

As was often the case in the past, the unity of the Church and the state spelled a deplorable end to the invasion.

The voice of the Orthodox Church coming from Moscow sounded like a tocsin, dispelling doubts and mistrust. The Church addressed "All Christians of the world".

"...In the first place, the Russian Orthodox Church is addressing you, brother Christian warriors, who are now fighting in the armies of our allied countries. With a firm faith in your hearts, profoundly convinced of the justness of your cause, with a clear realization that this is an ideological war, a war of heroic exploits, a war in defence of the oppressed, a war for the rescue of centuries-old shrines—go with this faith, in the Name of the Lord, to restore the lands seized by the enemy, to liberate the people enslaved by it, and to put an end to its

unprecedentedly heinous crimes...

"May the Lord bless you, brothers in Christ, in your struggle for the just cause, for the triumph of freedom, goodness and justice in the world."

The inspired messages melted the ice of mistrust caused by estrangement and dissimilarity of views and historical destinies. In the great battle against the forces of evil the Church helped not only by word but also by deed. The story about the "Dmitry Donskoi" tank column is widely known. And this is what Father Mikhail Kolokolov, a 72-year priest from the village of Dmitrovskaya Gora, Kalinin Region, said in response to the call for raising funds for the "Aleksandr Nevsky" air squadron: "Please, accept my modest contribution, which I am sending from the bottom of my heart, to the destruction of the wild hordes of the rabid enemy."

The clergy and laymen of the Gorky Region collected 104 thousand rubles, and a Novosibirsk church—110 thousand rubles for the squadron named after the saintly Orthodox prince. On behalf of Sverdlovsk believers, Archpriest Andrianovsky donated 100 thousand rubles, the church council of the Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in the town of Kuznetsk, Penza Region, 150 thousand rubles; the money was handed over to the authorities by Archpriest Avraamy Mikhailov. Acting on behalf of his parishioners, Father Vladimir Stefanov, a priest from the Dormition Church in Izhevsk, donated 273 thousand rubles. This money was used to build two planes.

Documents have preserved for us the name of the priest who, without waiting for a call, was the first to contribute 100 thousand rubles from his personal savings to the cause of victory. In his telegram to Stalin, Aleksandr Troitsky wrote: "From the very first day of the Great Patriotic War against the age-old enemies of the Russian people—the German beasts—I have been urging parishioners to help the Red Army, and in my sermons damned the German violators and infanticides."

Such letters were common for the initial period of the war. Thus, leading members of the parish council of the Trinity Church in the city of Gorky—Dmitry Vysokov, Sergei Yablokov and Anna Klyagina—reported to the Moscow Patriarchate that "all the money coming to the church will be directly forwarded to the

defence fund, as the community does not intend to accumulate its reserves, and the church itself is maintained exclusively by worshippers' care and love".

In 1943-1944, the money being raised by the Russian Orthodox Church came to the defence fund in an endless stream, totalling "150 million rubles, not counting donations in the form of all kind of valuable things". Among these millions of rubles there is money with a difference—it was collected in besieged Leningrad. After the blockade was run, Metropolitan Aleksy indicated the sum: 13 million rubles. Some people will probably smile sceptically at this figure: what this money meant in Leningrad at that time when there was nothing to buy. But we should not forget that this money was earned by hard and honest labour of its residents, who, together with their last rubles, often gave their lives, and in such cases priests had to conduct panikhidas in the same church.

The life of clergymen hardly differed from that of their parishioners. They drank the cup of sorrow and tears to the dregs. The words said by St. Paul the Apostle seemed to get a new lease of life in long-suffering Leningrad: *Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour, working with our own hands...* (1 Cor. 4. 11, 12).—Every Leningrad clergyman, irrespective of his rank in the church hierarchy, could say so about himself.

Still, there was a person among them whom many Leningraders viewed as the hope and conscience of the besieged city. I recall our family's return from evacuation, the tiny room in which we lived for many long years crowded together, the lampada burning in front of the modest icons of the Mother of God and St. Nicholas. Alas, my father's prayers proved to be belated: I was not destined to meet with many of my relatives again. But those who survived often recalled Metropolitan Aleksy (secular name Sergei Vladimirovich Simansky) of Leningrad and Novgorod and pronounced his name with a special reverence and respect. Much later I saw his picture in a church calendar. At that time, when I was still a child, I pictured him as a Russian bogatyr (giant—*Tr.*) with a powerful booming voice like the trumpet of Jericho, since it was heard in the remotest corners of the city. "Although our city's present situation is extremely difficult, we



firmly believe that it is being saved by the protection of the Mother of God and the heavenly intercession of its patron—St. Aleksandr Nevsky.”

Whenever I heard the name of Metropolitan Aleksy I involuntarily recalled the story told by my aunt, who was in Leningrad from the first to the last day of its blockade. I do not remember all the details of this story, but when I asked her: “Why d’you think the Germans, who were already on the outskirts of Leningrad, could not capture it in the autumn of 1941?”, she, being a mild and peaceable person, replied with irritation: “Because they are impious, yes, they are, and their swastika is of a heathen nature. And they were not destined to march past here as victors because they encountered an insurmountable obstacle. That obstacle was a circle which the city’s chief priest Aleksy drew on the map with his own hand and then flew in a plane along this circle and sprinkled it with Holy Water. And that’s why the German panzers stopped dead in their tracks and failed to advance even for an inch, although the road was open for them...”

With the vehemence typical of my young age I shouted back: “And what our soldiers, tankmen, artillerymen, gunners, sailors, airmen, did all those three years? D’you think they were sitting, twiddling their thumbs?” To which my aunt calmly replied: “Neither they nor we idled our time away. But Metropolitan Aleksy was praying for us all days and nights. And therefore the Lord granted life to many,” and, as if forestalling my next question about casualties and victims, added: “But even he is not omnipotent; the Lord punished us for our transgressions and disbelief.”

Much, much later I got to realize that this ordinary Russian woman, who every morning, at dawn, went with a spade in hands to build fortifications, was prompted by the noble Christian sacrifice-making feeling. It was just as natural for her as an acute realization of personal involvement in the destinies of the Homeland. I shall not tell you anything new if I say that hundreds of thousands of Leningraders left this world for ever precisely with these feelings, firmly believing in the need for Russia’s sin-offering.

I did not manage to find any documentary evidence of Metropolitan Aleksy’s flight around the city, but this does not minimize the role he played in Leningrad’s defence. Many people believed sometimes

that he was ubiquitous, although he had no personal car and used ordinary means of transport such as trams or passing cars. He hurried to wherever his pastoral word was urgently needed. To be sure, he did not intend to replace or stand in for priests of this or that church, but, seeing how they were straining themselves to the breaking point, starving, sharing the last crumbs of food with local people, spending nights on duty together with anti-aircraft defence men, he strove to help them perform their important mission in every way.

Practically all residents of besieged Leningrad knew him personally, and the words he said in the St. Nicholas Cathedral at the very beginning of the war were widely circulated among local people. “You should always bear in mind”, Metropolitan Aleksy told parishioners, “that a complete and early victory over the enemies can be achieved only in a close cooperation between the fighting and home fronts”. It was four years away from this victory when he said these words.

One of the first paschal nights in 1942 was particularly memorable for the Nazis’ frenzy. It seemed as if a chasm was gaping and the city was being engulfed by roar and fire. It is noteworthy that Nazi artillery shelling and bombing were chiefly spearheaded against Leningrad churches. On that night Metropolitan Aleksy conducted a divine service in the St. Vladimir Cathedral. Suddenly, two explosions thundered one after another, and when Vladyka Aleksy and Deacon Piskunov went out into the street, they saw a seriously damaged corner of the cathedral and a huge shell-hall by its wall. “And this in a paschal night!” Metropolitan Aleksy said bitterly. “All right! Things will change. Christ is risen!... Our duty is to be firm and adamant: we are Russians, we are Orthodox Christians.”

Appreciating the patriotic effort of the Leningrad clergy, in a telegram addressed to Metropolitan Aleksy, Stalin asked him to “convey to the Orthodox Russian clergy and believers of the Leningrad Diocese my greetings and the Red Army’s gratitude for their concern for the Red Army”.

In carrying out his Christian duty Metropolitan Aleksy was greatly assisted by his own sister, Mother Evfrosinia. She seemed to be able to cope with any task and perform any work: to attend to various church needs, prepare modest meals which helped many parishioners to keep

their strength and even to survive and tend the sick and wounded. The patience and sacrifice-making, personified by Mother Evfrosinia, became the symbol of the nobility of soul of all Leningrad women.

On October 11, 1943, in the Smolny Palace, eleven Orthodox clergymen were decorated with medals "For the Defence of Leningrad". The first to receive this award was Metropolitan Aleksy. On that day the medal was presented also to Father Pavel Tarasov, dean of the Transfiguration Cathedral; Father Vladimir Rummyantsev, dean of the St. Nicholas Cathedral; Father Mikhail Stavinsky, rector of the St. Nicholas Church at the Okhtinskoye Cemetery; Father Lev Yegorovsky, priest at the Transfiguration Cathedral; Deacon Piskunov of the St. Vladimir Cathedral, and others.

It was for the first time since 1917 Revolution that "ministers of worship" received government, and moreover, military, awards. This signified the official recognition of their services and contribution to the defence effort. And when in January 1944 a triumphal salvo thundered over the city, ushering the end to the blockade, the gun salvo could not deaden the joyous ringing of bells in the churches of Leningrad. In the St. Nicholas Cathedral, a divine service was conducted by the metropolitan himself. He opened it with the words: "Glory be to God in the highest Who granted our valiant warriors a fresh brilliant victory at our Leningrad Front."

The staunchness and courage displayed by the great city on the Neva and the victory won on the banks of the Volga radically changed the position of the Russian Orthodox Church. Visiting Volgograd a few years ago, I, quite unexpectedly for myself, became a witness to a conversation between two war veterans, who, in all probability, were brought together by the Battle of Stalingrad. They were standing by the world-famous Pavlov House. I was travelling without a guide, assuming that the information I gleaned from lectures on the history of the art of warfare was quite sufficient for a person to have an idea about the fierce fighting for what seemed to be a quite inconspicuous building. I knew that senior sergeant Pavlov headed an assault group which first dislodged the Germans from the house and, having turned it into an impregnable fortress, held it for several months till the liquidation of the Stalingrad "pocket". I was very much surprised to hear the

words of one of the former soldiers:

"You know, Pyotr, (I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the name) it appears that before the army our Pavlov was a monk, and his father was a priest. It is quite possible that the Lord's blessing helped him to hold out..."

But let us return to 1943, a year significant for the Russian Orthodox Church. Her authority gained ground with every passing day. One evidence of this is the resumption of the publishing activity of the Moscow Patriarchate suspended in 1936. The year 1942 witnessed the appearance of a very significant book, entitled *The Truth About Religion in Russia*, and in September 1943 the first issue of *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* came off the press.

Metropolitan Nikolai Yarushevich of Krutitsy, a closest associate of His Holiness Patriarch Sergy, was the actual head of the magazine. Contemporaries say that Metropolitan Nikolai was a man of a rare tact, outstanding intellect and a remarkable writer, who strove to lend a clearly patriotic slant to the press organ of the Russian Church.

Within a brief span of time this press organ of the Moscow Patriarchate gained popularity not only in ecclesiastical but also in broad public circles. From the very start the work of its editorial board was aimed at consolidating the Orthodox world.

Canonical relations between the Orthodox Churches of Russia and Georgia were interrupted soon after the February revolution of 1917. As a result of long talks, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia Kalistrate and representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate issued a joint statement on November 19, 1943, in which they officially declared that "to our common joy we are re-establishing the prayerful and eucharistic communion between the Russian and Georgian Autocephalous Sister-Churches".

The Estonian Orthodox Church followed suit. Acting on behalf of the laity, Archpriest Khristofor Vink, priest Nikolai Kokla and others vowed that they would put an end to the schism and gave a promise "to be loyal and obedient to the Russian Mother-Church and her Head—the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia."

At the close of 1943 the Moscow Patriarchate got a message from Jerusalem. "The Most Holy in Zion Mother of Churches is rejoicing at the wonderful developments in Russia", wrote Patriarch



Timotheos of Jerusalem, "blessing and glorifying the Name of the Lord for rewarding the faith of the pious Russian people, crowning their sacred struggle for freedom with the weapon of truth, and granting them victories and brilliant triumphs over the attackers."

Pressed back by the Red Army, the Nazi war machine was retreating westward. Among those who was bringing victory to the invaded land were representatives of the Church.

Archpriest Aleksandr Solertovsky, an honorary rector of the Church of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God, had a long and hard life, and only few people knew that during one of the battles at Stalingrad he was severely wounded and, bleeding heavily, managed to crawl to the nearest aid post. He became an invalid and received his official decorations for courage and valour in hospital. He refused to resign himself to the idea of being an invalid, held out and, after treatment, came back to the ambo. Parishioners recall that he was a priest who zealously and ardently prayed for others and brought up many "spiritual children... in the spirit of love of God's Church".

In his brief autobiography, written in 1975, Archbishop Leonid Lobanov of Kharkov and Bogodukhov, said: "I joined the Soviet Army as a volunteer and became involved in the nation-wide military feat during the fighting on the Volga. On August 23, 1943, our Guards unit hoisted a banner of victory over much-suffered Kharkov. The fighting army was gaining in strength, it had many Heroes of the Soviet Union in its ranks. Our Guards unit carried the banner across the whole of the Ukraine, and, fighting fiercely in pursuit of the enemy, was one of the first to cross Romania, Transylvania; it carried its banners over the mountain passes of the Carpathians, Transylvanian Alps, over the Hungarian Valley, crossed dozens of rivers, took part in the fighting for Budapest, captured the capital city of Slovakia, Bratislava, by storm; routed the enemy in Austria, advancing in its victorious march as far as the capital of fraternal Czechoslovakia.

"Particularly memorable for me, who took part in all these historic battles, was the fighting in Kharkov. The forced retreat made the enemy still more ferocious: they knew they would never come to the holy Russian land again..."

The modesty of the author of these lines is beyond doubt. It is probably because the heaviest fighting near Kharkov became particularly impressed on his memory that Father Leonid decided to link his post-war life with that city and took an active part in the restoration of its churches.

It is not overnight that Archpriest Vladimir Yelkhovsky made up his mind to devote his life to the Church. It took him much time to come to this decision: he had to traverse many hard versts of bitter retreat, spend many an anxious day in trenches, witness the death of his comrades, the sorrow of people over ashes and ruins, taste the joy of victory over the enemy and come to a firm determination not to allow universal bloodshed any more.

Shortly before the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Victory, Father Vladimir became the head of the Economic Management Department of the Moscow Patriarchate. "The outbreak of war found me in my home town of Pereyaslavl-Zalesky, where I came on June 21 to spend my holiday", he recalls. "In a day's time I was already in Orel where, together with a group of reserve officers like me, I received a battalion of the regiment quartered in the city. This was the beginning of the third war in my life... The next stages in my military service—Kursk, Voronezh, a forced 40-day retreat... beyond the Volga. Then came the turning point at last, and we began to move westward... This was followed by fighting at the Kursk bulge... The earth was literally trembling from gun salvos, the bright July sun was hidden by the clouds of explosions... Then, fighting all the way, we approached the Polish border, crossed the Bug, reached Kovel, Kholm, Rovno, Lodz, Lublin and, next to it, Majdanec... Poles welcomed us with ovations and threw flowers and ripe cherries onto our vehicles. Then—from the Vistula to the Oder..."

Retired sergeant-major Viktor Konoplyov celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Victory in the dignity of Metropolitan of Kaliningrad and Kashin, although, as Metropolitan Aleksy said himself, he "was on the verge of grave but, thanks to God's grace, survived, nevertheless".

Unfortunately, the brief autobiographical sketch could not tell us about many events related to the memorable war years. "I was mobilized in October 1941", Metropolitan Aleksy writes. "Very soon

I was sent to the North-Western Front, and on May 5 (1942—*Auth.*) was wounded. After hospital treatment I was sent to the front line where, being a private, I performed the duties of assistant platoon commander... For duly carrying out senior commanders' orders (after the death of the company commander I had to lead the company during fighting) I was promoted to the rank of senior sergeant and decorated with the medal 'For Combat Services'."

Front-line soldiers know only too well that the posts of platoon and company commanders became vacant with amazing rapidity, that a man who ventured to arouse soldiers for an attack, to confront death, experienced many complex feelings which took him genuine courage to cope with. German sharp-shooters were literally hunting for Soviet commanders of all ranks. One of the bullets hit senior sergeant Konoplyov. Another hospital and excruciating struggle for survival. Viktor Konoplyov did survive, and when he was being transferred to the reserve in 1945, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant-major and presented a special certificate signed by Marshal of the Soviet Union L. Govorov, Commander of the Leningrad Military District.

The parting words said on that day were addressed to hundreds of fighting men, but sergeant-major Konoplyov felt as if they concerned him alone:

"In the grim years of war you, together with the forces of the Leningrad Front, traversed a long and arduous road, fought courageously for the Homeland, for Leningrad, for freedom and independence of the Soviet people. On this parting day we say to you from the bottom of our hearts: thank you, dear comrade, for your honest service to the Motherland, for your combat services in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. Our country and Leningrad will never forget this. We wish you, dear comrade, a good journey back home, joy in life and success in labour. We also wish you to remain a true son of your beloved Motherland."

In the town of Zvenigorodka, Cherkassky Region, the Germans posted up announcements with the picture of Father Georgy, a figure indicating 10,000 marks and a few lines of text underneath the picture, accusing the priest of many mortal sins. When townspeople read this text, it gave them the shivers. Father Georgy Pisanko

recalled much later: "November 16, 1942, is a memorable day for me: Gebitskomiissar of the town of Zvenigorodka promised a reward for my head..."

Why did the Germans hate this Orthodox priest so much? When the war broke out Father Georgy was forty-five. During mobilization, he, as a non-combatant, was assigned to serve in one of the units inside the country. But in the early months of the war no one could vouch that the home front will not become the front line in a matter of days. And this is precisely what happened to the regiment in which private Pisanko served. Its soldiers dug trenches for withdrawing units, but had to use them themselves and to fight against odds. Deafened by a shell explosion, Father Georgy was taken prisoner. He chose an opportune moment for escape, but was soon caught and, escorted by shepherd-dogs, as was usually practised in German POW camps, put in jail. After tortures and vicious mockery he soon found himself in a workers' team, digging trenches, from where he made another escape.

This explains why the local führer was so anxious to see the rebellious priest hung as soon as possible. But the people, who, risking their own lives, offered shelter to Father Georgy and hid him, deprived the Nazis of this opportunity.

Sermons delivered by priests, who remained on the enemy-occupied territory, often carried no less weight than the latest communiques of the Soviet Information Bureau, which in the early months of the war never reached such remote places as the village of Odrazhyn in the Gomel Region. But one day, in the partisan mail from Moscow, they discovered Metropolitan Sergy's well-known message. Partisans forwarded it to Father Vasily Kopychko of the Odrazhyn Church of the Dormition. Even before Father Vasily read this message, he had told his parishioners that the war was unjust on the part of Hitler and Germany, that it was doomed to meet its inevitable fiasco and, as a rule, finished his divine services with prayers for granting victory to the Red Army. He would often say to his parishioners: "Why are you sitting at home? How can you tolerate the foes? You must take up arms and join the partisans."

As for Father Vasily, he found himself in their midst under the circumstances



described in detail by the commander of a partisan brigade I. Shubitidze in his book *Polesskiye Byli* (Polesye Stories) brought out by the "Belarus" Publishers in 1969.

"I served at that time near Polotsk and knew many partisan leaders personally. From them I heard several stories about priests who rendered great assistance to partisans. Unfortunately, their names have escaped my memory (I still hope to find them in archives) and therefore I shall make use of I. Shubitidze's reminiscences.

"We called him (Father Vasily—*Auth.*) our agitator in jest and one day invited him to our camp... Kopychko closely watched our life for a long time, visited about a dozen dug-outs and said at supper: 'Well, how can you believe these Germans! Savages, atheists, bandits. I see that all of you are Orthodox people: may God grant you health!' We could see that Kopychko was not wrong in his opinions; he promised to pray for us and do what he could to help us."

The "partisan priest" had to pay dearly for the identity of his views with people's avengers. At the end of 1943 sleuths managed to learn about his contacts with the forest and decipher the true meaning of his sermons. Father Vasily and his family were hidden by partisans, but the church and his house were burnt down by German punitive squads.

After the liberation of Kaluga, a few military hospitals were opened in the city, whose believers demonstrated to sick and wounded warriors that henceforth their recovery became a matter of concern not only for doctors and medical nurses. Books, letter paper, plates, dishes, tobacco, matches—the necessities of life collected in the city and its environs, added to the hospitals' modest means. Moreover, local believers donated 50 thousand rubles for their needs.

These same people were in constant attendance at seriously wounded soldiers' bedsides in hospitals. And it can be safely said that the smiles and warm handshakes of those who conquered death were the most precious reward for such voluntary helpers. A formidable force—love of one's fellow men—blocked the way for death. Sometimes this feeling manifested itself quite unexpectedly. When wounded soldiers listened to fanciful modulations of the accordion or favourite gramophone records they knew for certain that the church was directly in-

volved in such undertakings.

Mother Serafima Zubareva was an example of sacrificial service. Her hospital colleagues never suspected that military doctor Zubareva said prayers in between surgical operations and wound dressings, regarding them a medicine to alleviate sufferings of the wounded. The words coming from the depths of the soul disposed to patience and gave hope for recovery. The difficult war versts covered by Mother Serafima with the 3rd Ukrainian Front along the roads of Russia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania defy count...

Two hundred and fifteen children, rescued by women postulants from a bombed train heading for Germany, lived in a Dombok convent near Mukachevo as on a freedom island. Nazi sleuths hunted about the place, but during the five months the convent's inmates spent in Dombok until the coming of the Red Army, not a single hair dropped from the bristling heads of little boys and girls. Where are they now? Do they still remember the words of the prayers they learned from Mother Fevronia and her helpers?..

On May 15, 1944, the Orthodox world was shocked by the news of the death of Patriarch Sergy of Moscow and All Russia. Summing up the results of his service, the obituary said: "...a great hierarch has died who brought the ship of our Church to a quiet haven; the Primate, who elevated the Russian Church to her former height, has gone to the other world." In accordance with Patriarch Sergy's last will and the seniority principle of the episcopate of the Russian Church, Metropolitan Aleksey of Leningrad and Novgorod became Patriarchal Locum Tenens.

In the very first days as the head of the Church Metropolitan Aleksey declared that he would undeviatingly follow the path chartered by Patriarch Sergy and that he intended to uphold the interests of the Russian Orthodox Church as the Church of a great power. The Local Council, held in Moscow on January 31-February 2, 1945, elected Metropolitan Aleksey Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. The press pointed out that the events associated with the election of a new patriarch became a "manifestation of the Russian religio-patriotic unity". The solemnities concluded with a concert in the Tchaikovsky Hall where church canticles sounded majesti-

cally and penetratingly for the first time in many years.

Among those present was a metropolitan who involuntarily attracted general attention. Father Veniamin, a hierarch of the North American Church, himself displayed a keen interest in what was taking place around him. This interest was quite understandable: nearly a quarter of a century passed since the ship, among whose passengers was Father Veniamin, then the spiritual tutor of Wrangel's army and a member of the Council of Ministers, cast off from the Crimean coast.

The complex and contradictory destiny of Orthodox Russian people abroad seemed to be concentrated in one human life. Let us try and trace it.

From his childhood, Ivan Fedchenkov, a Tambov peasant by birth, took to religion. Thinking of no other path apart from serving the Church, in 1917 he set off for distant St. Petersburg, entered the Theological Academy where he was professed with the name Veniamin.

A measured and regular course of life would hardly single him out from among the clergy, were it not for the war and revolution: he met the former as a patriot of his Motherland, while the latter threw him to the camp of "enemies of the proletariat". With this label he was forced to leave Russia, and, en route to Constantinople, he discussed, together with Wrangel and Metropolitan Antony Khrapovitsky, a plan for establishing a Church which would oppose the Soviets. At the well-known Karlovci Church Council, held under anti-Soviet slogans, speakers often referred to his name as an active champion of a hard anti-Soviet line.

Metropolitan Sergy's message addressed in 1927 to the Orthodox priests who, for various reasons, found themselves outside Russia, called for a clear formulation of their position. In this message the Deputy Patriarchal Locum Tenens called upon clergymen to show loyalty to the Soviet state. Moreover, Metropolitan Sergy threatened to "expell from the clerical corps within the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate" those clergymen who refused to comply with his call. Exactly three years later this fate befell Metropolitan Yevlogy who was in charge of West European parishes at that time. In June 1927, hierarchs serving outside Russia assembled in Paris, and a firm voice of Father Veniamin resounded at this council: "As for me, I do not

detach myself from Metropolitan Sergy." Indeed, he had to think a lot and courageously withstand numerous attacks to be able to pronounce these words.

This is how the first patriarchal parish—the Metochion of the Three Holy Hierarchs—came into being in the basement of a house situated on an inconspicuous Paris street. Parishioners respectfully referred to it as the "holy basement". Eventually, it grew in size, embracing five parishes in Paris, Nice, Vanve and Monff.

Soon after Germany's attack on the Soviet Union all Orthodox clergymen joined the campaign for helping the Homeland. Also, Russian Orthodox priests contributed their bit to the French Resistance movement. Among those arrested by the Germans for contacts with this movement were Archimandrite Afanasy Nechayev, Professor I. Stratonov, warden of patriarchal parishes, and priests Dimitry Sobolev and Mikhail Boyelsky.

The Metochion's founder was in America at that time, where, on instructions from the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, he started Orthodox life practically from zero. To the destructive brazen force of the invading Nazis, Metropolitan Veniamin (he was elevated to this dignity in 1938 and his associates counterposed counterpropaganda, denouncing Nazism and calling for parishioners' unity, human compassion and total disinterestedness. The exact sum contributed by Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian Americans to the Russian relief fund is still unknown, but it is beyond doubt that it was quite sizeable.

In his impressions about the Local Council Metropolitan Veniamin asks: "Hasn't the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, transferred her centre to Moscow?" And this is what he said about Russian people: "Over the month of my contacts with them... in churches, carriages, in the underground, trams, during private visits, talks and chance meetings I had an opportunity to watch my native people and understand them... In the first place, I would say a few words about believers. O Goodness, how ardent their faith is... Now I can declare without any doubt: the Orthodox faith lives on in the Russian people... and I am leaving for America quite happy and without any fears for the faith and the Church."



In 1946 Metropolitan Veniamin was granted Soviet citizenship and completed his earthly path in the Pskov-Pechery Monastery.

Speaking about Orthodox believers abroad it would be unjust not to mention Mother Maria Skobtseva, who won a legendary fame. By her entire life Mother Maria demonstrated that Christian love should be expressed in deeds. That is probably why Parisians remember her as being always in a hurry, with a knapsack filled with food for her numerous charges. Risking her own life, she saved the lives of many of those who were to face gallows or a firing squad. But when she was arrested, her executioners never heard her appeal for mercy. The words of the Gospels, a copy of which she managed to preserve, could be often heard in the barrack occupied by Soviet girls, inmates of the notorious Ravensbrück camp. The good news dissolved the venom of insolability and revived the lost hope for deliverance. On March 31, 1945, when the booming of the cannonade could already be heard in the death camp, the Nazis hastened to dispose of the "Russian material" in gas chambers. Mother Maria took the place of a woman, who, it is to be hoped, was lucky enough to welcome the long-awaited victory.

A month before this momentous event, Patriarch Aleksy of Moscow and All Russia was invited by Stalin. He was accompanied by Metropolitan Nikolai of Krutitsy and Protopresbyter Nikolai Kolchitsky. The representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church presented to Stalin an "exquisitely wrought goblet" and expressed their intention to continue to faithfully serve their people. "Iosif Vissarionovich", Father Nikolai recalled," showed an extremely sympathetic and cordial attitude to all our plans and needs and promised to support us in future, too."

It would be wrong to idealize relationships between the Orthodox clergy and Stalin. Although all official receptions and meetings culminated with toasts to the health of the Supreme Commander and newspapers published texts like this one: "The Russian Orthodox Church blesses the feat he (Stalin— *Auth.*) performs for the good and happiness of our Homeland and is praying to God, beseeching Him to help our leader", the worm of doubt that the ruler's kindness might turn into wrath at any moment gnawed many church people. But the distressing thoughts

were hidden deep in the soul and made way for general jubilation aroused by the news of the victorious conclusion of the war. This happened on the first paschal week and a comparison involuntarily came to mind: Napoleon's and Hitler's invasions began at an interval of two June days and both came to an inglorious end, one at Christmas and the other at Easter.

It is impossible to completely discard the opinion shared by the majority of religious people that the war really became a national Golgotha on which the Nazis attempted to crucify our Motherland. In the victorious month of May 1945, and on Christ's Resurrection, the hope for Russia's oncoming resurrection could be clearly seen.

The long-awaited victory came on May 9, 1945. On that day a message from Patriarch Aleksy of Moscow and All Russia was read in churches: "The last hour of Nazi Germany has struck. Its forces have been routed and smashed. Germany has suffered an utter defeat. The banner of victory is fluttering above the enemy country. Glory and thanks be to God! Peace has come to the Land of Russia and, thanks to the joint efforts of the allied governments and armies, has come to many other lands as well... God has put the audacious dreams of villains and brigands to shame, and now we see them facing a stern retribution for their crimes and evil doings...

"We have been waiting for this joyous Lord's day with confidence and patience... and after unprecedented military feats, after the incredible strain of all people's forces, Orthodox Russia is now offering prayers to the Lord, the Source of Victory and Peace, thanking Him for His heavenly help in war time...

"A great deal of hard work is still ahead, but today we can breathe freely and get down to difficult but constructive work...

"In the persons of her archpastors, pastors and faithful children, I am calling upon the Holy Church to pray with the same zeal and the same ardent faith for the success of our country's peaceful efforts."

In their magnitude, the aims of the Orthodox Church set to herself in conditions of peace were not inferior to those of the war period. She had to help the country raise towns, villages and churches from ruins, and, while praying for the dead, not to forget about those who sur-

vived, to extend a helping hand to cripples and orphans.

The Church's well-known charity manifested itself in raising funds for children and orphans, children of former fighting men. A month after the end of the war Stalin sent a telegram to the Patriarch: "Thank You for Your concern for the children and families of Red Army men. Please, accept my greetings and the gratitude of the Red Army". Soon after that Patriarch Aleksy of Moscow and All Russia was decorated with the Order of the Red Banner of Labour.

Asked by an *Izvestia* correspondent: "What did the Church do during the war?", the Patriarch replied very laconically: "In the first place, the Church was praying."

Nazi atrocities were recorded in hundreds of volumes—a collective effort of many commissions, which, as a rule, included also representatives of the Orthodox Church. At the Nuremberg trial she could make her own claim, and therefore the verdict passed on the Nazi criminals was viewed as a logical outcome of an intense struggle of goodness and evil.

The Nazis nurtured evil plans directed against Orthodox churches in Berlin, Dresden and Leipzig, attempting to erase the very concept of Orthodoxy in Germany itself. Fortunately, the churches survived. Against the background of the ruins of routed Berlin, everyone's attention was attracted by the imposing and harmonious building of the Resurrection Cathedral erected in an old Russian style. Its dean, Father Dimitry Kravtsov, a graduate of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, told the priests who came to the German capital from Russia: "We have only one way to follow and only one wish—to join the Mother Church, and we are happy that this opportunity has come."

Similar ideas were expressed by a person whom Goebbels called "enemy No. 2". What did His Grace Archbishop Aleksandr Nemolovsky of Brussels and Belgium do to occupy such a place of "honour", being

only second to Stalin, in the ranks of Germany's major foes? At fault was the same desire to join the Orthodox Church. He was arrested in 1940 for his anti-Hitler sermons. In a Berlin prison, Father Aleksandr was "presented with" a label bearing the figure 2, in addition to heavy shackles, which he had to wear for more than a year, after which he was released and placed under home arrest. The authorities prohibited him to display his oratorical skill, to go farther than the Russian cemetery in Tehel, and his duties in the Church of Sts. Constantine and Helena were limited to conducting panikhidas.

Responding to Archbishop Aleksandr's call, none of the priests serving in Orthodox churches in Germany left their parishes. The message addressed by Father Aleksandr to Patriarch Aleksy, in which he, referring to "inordinate oppression, deprivations and persecutions" (outside the home country), asked the Russian Primate "to be taken under his holy omophorion", sounded as a well-considered decision.

On October 14, 1945, Berlin witnessed an unprecedented event. On the Feast of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God, the affiliation of the Orthodox clergy in Germany with the Moscow Patriarchate was solemnized in the Resurrection Cathedral. Majestic strains of church canticles and praises for Patriarch Aleksy, Archbishop Aleksandr, and the victorious Russian fighting men sounded at the place where only shortly before that booming guns had held sway.

The war lasted 1418 days and was a great trial for the people and the Orthodox Church. In this terrible, unprecedented war she maintained her honour and dignity and is now asserting and upholding these lofty qualities by peacemaking activity. Every single day of her service is permeated with the awareness of a special responsibility for the destinies of the native country.

BORIS KOSTIN



### The Year 1922. Resolved: To Fleece and Shoot

(Based on KGB and CPSU Central Committee Archives)

#### RAILWAY STATION

On the morning of May 7, 1922, the sun was shining brightly, making Moscow dirt and commoners' beggarly clothing ever more conspicuous. Not less conspicuous were the polish of high-ranking office workers' boxcalf boots, commissars' cars and Red Army men's bayonets.

At the booking-office of the Yaroslavsky Railway Station on the Kalanchovskaya Square there lay, covered with bast matting, a boy who died of emaciation. Next to the exit to the platform, a little girl was sitting under a May Day poster—she, too, was doomed to be covered with bast matting in a couple of hours. The tiny roll she had been given as alms, dropped out of her terribly wasted childish hands. The poor creature was trying to say something in whisper, staring fixedly at the roll, which was of no use to her any longer. Was she praying...?

A skinny old man was going to and fro, rocking a typhus-stricken child to sleep in his arms and begging people for alms.

"Walking around the place and spreading disease", a well-dressed man with a portfolio said angrily.

"What on earth are you all coming to Moscow for? Aren't we sending food to the provinces?" complained another, more tender-hearted, man, also from among high-ranking employees, judging by his appearance.

"We've come from Ufa, we don't get anything", the old man, desperate with grief and starvation, muttered.

RKP member (Party membership card No. 229607, Mussi Factory Party cell) Kudryavtseva, who came to the station to buy a railway ticket, was outraged by the poverty and disorder she saw in the populous city, which was the centre of communist ideas. When she returned home, still blazing with Party anger, Kudryavtseva wrote a letter to Comrade Molotov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the RKP

(Bolsheviks). She painted a ghastly picture of a Soviet railway station and demanded that "those who are to blame for this" be duly punished. It goes without saying that she meant not the Communist leaders, with whose connivance the whole of the vast country now experienced an unprecedented hunger, which already took a toll of more than a million human lives, but petty office workers who failed to create outward appearances of order on the Kalanchovskaya Square. The Party member No. 229607 demanded that they be punished... for counter-revolutionary agitation, because "Moscow visitors, witnesses to this horror, are spreading rumours about all this in their towns, villages and regions. Our Party enemies readily snatch at this".

The country was starving, but Kudryavtseva's only concern were "enemies" who might learn about it.

#### FACTORY

Workers of the Guzhon Factory hoped that after a two-month delay they would get their wages at least for May Day. Alas, they had to celebrate the red-banner holiday of the working people with empty pockets and stomachs. When work was suddenly suspended, they wondered: what was it? Did they brought food rations or wages for them? Workers were terribly disappointed to learn that they were assembled for a meeting. The factory canteen, which once a day did something to keep them alive, was hung with posters so much familiar to everyone from their street doubles:

"Church gold—for the starving."

"In the name of Christ church people must give bread, and not stones, to the starving children of the Volga region."

"Church services should be conducted with wooden chalices and in canvas vestments as in the old days!"

A lecturer, who, together with a multi-

tude of Party activists, sat at a long table covered with red calico, rose to his feet and in a strained hoarse voice began to splash out "into the masses" the phrases he had memorized during briefings in the anti-religious propaganda commission:

"Comrade workers, the churches, which keep reiterating the words about love of one's neighbour, are full of gold and silver. These were brought there by a fat-bellied merchant, a factory owner, a nobleman and land owner, who fattened on the exploitation of the working people. Where are these valuables now? In accordance with the decree on the separation of the Church from the state, the workers' and peasants' government handed them over to groups of believers for temporary use. And two months ago, when moans of starving people could be heard all over Russia, it was decided to hand the church gold over to them..."

"We're starving ourselves!" a loud voice interrupted the speaker. "If you don't give us our wages today, we'll go on strike."

A sullen sea of workers suddenly came alive, began to stir, giving vent to despair and anger:

"Why have you cut our rations?"

"And what if they've squandered our money, chaps?"

"We'll go to Lenin and get what is due to us..."

"Comrade workers!" The lecturer raised his palm, and people calmed down a little, hoping that this time he might tell them something reasonable. "Be decent and not interrupt me. I'm just trying to explain to you who is to blame for the absence of money and food..."

The audience stirred again, realizing that they could not expect anything sensible from the visiting speaker. A spontaneous meeting was held which resolved... to strike till the workers get their wages...

The country was starving, and the workers' sole concern was how to provide for their families.

#### CHURCH

Commission members headed right for the sanctuary, for the Holy Gates, which cannot be entered by laymen, except the Emperor himself.

A priest entreated them on his knees not to ruin the church and not to take the shrines without which divine services could not be conducted.

"You grudge this petty cup and call yourselves Christians", an atheist shouted

angrily at the priest. "And yet this petty cup may save the lives of dozens of starving people!"

Might it, really? But why did commissars, who shouted the loudest about the need to feed the starving, would not give up the requisitioned cars, enormous salaries and special rations? Why did they keep servants, go for treatment abroad, and buy diamonds for their wives?..

The priest refused to help the sacrilegious robbers.

"You don't obey the decree!" Cain's offsprings attacked the priest.

"I obey our Lord Jesus Christ", the priest replied.

A behind-the-altar cross, tabernacle, church vessels were all dumped into bottomless boxes. The precious riza from the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God did not go in; a young atheist flattened it with his foot and said happily:

"I trust we've got a cartful of grain now. And there are lots of such 'Mothers' all over Russia—enough to feed people till the advent of communism."

The parishioners sang:

"O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us..."

But they interpreted the psalmist's words in a new way, to mean: "O commissars' children devastators! Happy shall he be that rewards you as you have served us and our church..."

The country was starving, yet churches became more and more crowded with people for whom God was the only hope.

#### GOKHRAN

The Church's gold and silver were brought to Moscow where they were deposited at GOKHRAN (State Depository). Documents about the stolen church property contain the identical words: "The evaluation is preliminary and inaccurate."

The most hunger-stricken gubernias asked Moscow to allow them to take if only a fraction of the requisitioned gold to be able to buy grain as soon as possible and thus save the dying. The answer was inclement: everything for Moscow, everything for GOKHRAN.

Not infrequently parishioners offered the authorities the remaining stocks of grain from their barns in exchange for the shrines taken away from their churches. But room No. 54 in the



Kremlin, where Pomgol (Hunger Relief Commission) leadership held its meetings, kept sending identical telegrams to gubernia executive committees: "Exchange of church valuables for grain and other products is inadmissible."

Precious rizas from particularly venerated icons, diamond-studded hierarchal mitras, silver church-chandeliers and candle-sticks, golden cups and crosses were being brought to GOKHRAN from all parts of Russia, impoverished over the three and a half years of the communist rule. The requisitioned shrines were evaluated in accordance with their weight, but the organizers of the robbery were mistaken in their hopes to live in clover for a long time on the money "earned" in this way. This money amounted to no more than seven or eight million pre-war rubles. It was less even than the sum the Political Bureau allocated on May 18 to Deputy Chairman of the GPU Ultricht. "In view of the need for and importance of a body of GPU secret agents, the Central Budget Committee is advised not to cut the credit for secret expenditures but approve it as requested by the GPU, i. e., 10 million pre-war rubles."

And the leaders kept biting titbits off the wealth accumulated by Orthodox Russian people over centuries—five percent of the total value "for the urgent needs of the Red Army", quite sizeable sums to support the Comintern or to build a palace for an ambassador.

The country was starving, while its godless rulers fleeced churches and sold "silver scrap" at the Sukharevsky Market in Moscow.

#### THE TOWN OF SHUYA

In a secret message, dated January, 30, the Council of People's Commissars' representative for stock-taking and concentration of church valuables, Trotsky, reported to the Council's Chairman, Lenin: "Requisition of valuables from these institutions (churches—*Auth.*) is a special task now being politically prepared from various sides."

In February-March, the same "representative" penned more than one paper, suggesting harsher measures against Orthodoxy, in an attempt to flood the entire state with workers "on the question of the Church and of splitting the clergy".

Aware of the Jesuitical schemes of the

Kremlin leaders and feeling that the believers were being instigated to engage in bloody clashes with the atheists, Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow and All Russia approached the authorities, requesting them to be given an opportunity to explain, through the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK*, the clergy's stance. He called believers to display submissiveness, and the communists—"due prudence", during the requisition of church valuables.

Unfortunately, bloody clashes could not be avoided. One of them took place in the town of Shuya, Ivanovo-Voznesensk Gubernia.

On Monday, March 13, a district requisition of valuables commission came to the Shuya cathedral after a divine service and demanded to immediately turn over all church plate made of gold, silver and precious stones to the hunger relief fund.

A crowd of parishioners reacted with reproaches and shouts:

"You ought to be ashamed. The commissars keep aside, sending you, fools, to perpetrate a blasphemy, and you behave like a docile herd."

"We're not gonna give you the key. The Mother of God shall not let the robbers in."

"D'you really think they are taking all this for the starving? All this will go for commissars' riding-breeches."

Pointing to the boys who had thrown several stones from afar at commission members, women reproached men:

"Aren't you ashamed: kids are defending the church, while you're standing idle here. Can't you take stakes and fetch a blow or two at the herods!"

Passions became too hot and, sensing a real danger, the commission retired only to reappear on Wednesday, this time with a mounted police detachment.

Alarm was sounded from the belfry. Workers and peasants in nearby villages stopped working and hurried to the cathedral square. With stones and logs, a crowd of worshippers drove the mounted police away from the church. Then the town authorities called a unit of infantry regiment No. 146. Drawn up in an extended line, the soldiers, their rifles at the ready, began to advance on the crowd, while people, with stacks and logs in their hands, forged ahead right towards the bayonets. The soldiers

wavered; four riflemen were beaten up and disarmed. But soon two vehicles with machine-guns arrived; they opened fire at the rebellious crowd, killing four and gravely wounding ten people. The crowd dispersed. In the evening the parishioners, who were most active in defending their church, were arrested... The requisition commission collected and took away three and a half poods of silver from the Shuya cathedral.

The Shuya events became known to Lenin, who was seriously ill at that time. He was glad that an opportune moment came for him to take the laurels of the conqueror of Orthodoxy away from the energetic Trotsky. On March 19, he dictated a man-hating, Jesuitical letter to Political Bureau members, harping on the same idea: now and only now, when they eat people in hunger-stricken localities there is a good occasion to fleece the Church and shoot the clergy...

The country was starving but for the men at the top rung of the state machinery this tragedy was a mere occasion for launching a fresh wave of executions.

#### THE POLITICAL BUREAU

At their regular sitting held on March 22, 1922, the semi-literate dictators, who became experts in all fields of science overnight and who were now armed with the method of destroying Orthodoxy, suggested in Lenin's letter, and with the fresh portion of Trotsky's theses, resolved:

"1. That the arrest of the Synod and the Patriarch be acknowledged as necessary, although not now but in 10 or 15 days.

"2. That the information about the Shuya events be published, and the Shuya priests and laymen involved in them brought before tribunal within a week (and instigators be shot).

"3. That within the same week trials be held against priests for misappropriation of church valuables (there are many such facts).

"4. That from the moment the news of the Shuya events appear in the press, a vigorous campaign be launched to make public the priests' rebellious attempts in Smolensk, Petrograd and elsewhere.

"5. That this be followed by the Synod's arrest.

"6. That requisitioning be started all over the country, leaving alone the

churches that have no valuables of any significance."

Everything was conducive to a further unruffled work of the rulers: guards behind the doors, guards on the Kremlin walls, guards all over the country, guards who were loyal thanks to a special weighty ration, the question of whose increase was regularly raised at Political Bureau sessions.

The country was starving, but Political Bureau members were busy working out a new anti-Christian campaign.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL

The auditorium of the Polytechnical Institute was filled to overflowing. The Moscow revolutionary tribunal was in session in connection with the prosecution of 54 clergymen and laymen, who had allegedly offered resistance during the expropriation of church valuables in Moscow churches. Actually, that had nothing to do with a court hearing: there was nothing to hear, since shortly before that farce a directive had been received from the Political Bureau, which met on May 4: "The priests are to be sentenced to capital punishment."

They were interrogating the patriarchal oikonomos, Hieromonk Makary, who had referred to members of the requisition commission not in very polite and flattering terms and, after taking off his vestments, went away not wanting to see the sanctuary being desecrated.

"What are your political views and convictions?" he was asked drowsily by Bek, who was in the chair.

"I'm a monarchist", the good-natured monk of a powerful build replied candidly.

"Do you belong to the monarchist party?"

"I belong to no party. I'm an altar server."

"How come: you're a monarchist when there is no monarch? Didn't Apostle Paul call for obeying the existing authority?"

"I do obey: I live peaceably just like all mortals, and do no harm to the authorities."

"Where do you serve?"

"I was a priest at the First Don Cossack Brigade, and am currently serving in the domestic chapel of the Patriarchal Metochion."



"Were it you who insulted the commission members?"

"Yes, I called them robbers and tyrants. I'm an altar server, and it's very painful for me to see sacerdotal objects being taken away."

In the latter half of May, Father Makary, who "confirmed his irreconcilability during the trial" was shot dead together with four other clergymen, and the authorities hastened to inform the God-fearing Moscow public about it...

People in the country were dying not only of starvation.

#### THE PATRIARCH

At six p.m. on May 6, i.e., on the day following the many-hour interrogation in the Revolutionary Tribunal, when bells in Moscow churches were ringing, summoning worshippers for an All-Night Vigil, a Red Army men's detachment appeared in the Trinity Metochion and announced to the Patriarch that he was being put under house arrest.

On May 7 Moscow newspapers raged:

"The Patriarch and his headquarters are the organizers and leaders of a major counter-revolutionary plot."

"The meek Tikhon has proved to be a rather skilful secret ober-organizer, who, through the network of his hierarchal agents, manipulated doltish and sly, clever and stupid, but equally greedy, 'ordinary' priests."

"There is a limit to everything. Let them put an end to Tikhon's intrigues as soon as possible."

On May 9, Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow and All Russia was escorted to the chief of the GPU Secret Department, Samsonov. Late at night His Holiness returned home from Lubyanka.

"Was it hard for you?" asked the Patriarch's cell attendant, worn out by long waiting.

"The interrogations were too harsh."

"And what are they going to do to you?"

"They promised to chop my head off", His Holiness replied with his usual good nature but sadly.

On Saturday, May 13, Nikita Okunev, a Moscow resident made the following entry in his diary:

"Today I went to the Patriarchal Metochion to attend All-Night Vigil. The service was fine, the 'right' one, as in a small old-time monastery. It was conducted by an ordinary hieromonk with

one hierodeacon. On the right clerics there sang a choir of amateur choristers of both sexes, for the most part in Holy Orders (they were singing and praying at the same time), sang skilfully and sonorously; on the left stood a famous reader, a young man with a perfect diction and a voice of rare beauty. When he began to sing, he was joined by the Patriarchal Archdeacon Avtonom, by far not an outstanding bass but a good and experienced singer. In general, everything was fine but very sad at the same time. The Patriarch was standing in the sanctuary, praying as an ordinary worshipper throughout the whole service. He could be seen from behind the left clerics when the Holy Doors were opened. He stood to the right of the altar in a simple cassock. And this is also how he appeared before the court—'tall and slender'. It was sad and painful to see such humility of the Head of the Russian Church perhaps pleasing to his heart, but this time undoubtedly forced. And the flock? Where is the 'God-loving' Moscow? Why didn't it hurry these days to this cosy and modest church, to this Russian Vatican? After all, everybody knows that a whole pack of specialists in blasphemy has been unleashed against the Patriarch. Everyone vaguely expects extreme measures against the Holy Father. It is clear that all kind of abuses and hardships including capital punishment are being prepared for him. Why didn't the worshippers go if only to take a look at the Patriarch in these days, dreary and trying for him? Are there few old men and, in general, respectable people in Moscow, who always attend Sunday services? They should have gone on foot or by tram, from their Plyushchikha, Khamovniki, Serpukhovka, Taganka, Butyrka or Gruzinskaya streets to the Trinity Metochion. They should have gone there, at least by turns, one decent elderly man from each parish, and thus would counter the atheists, who are now shouting loudly, and not without reason, that the Church is going to seed, desintegrating and degenerating! It would be a treat consolation for the old man to see that it was not old women alone who came to pray together with him (as was the case today, with rare exceptions) but also some three hundred elderly God-fearing Moscow men. He would regard this as a manifestation of sympathy for himself on the part of believers and would appear

before the unjust court even 'taller and more slender' and, undoubtedly, righteous."

The country was dying out, and its spirit was on the decline.

**"THERE WAS MUCH THAT WE DID NOT KNOW"**

This phrase is still being used by many high-ranking liars, who want to evade punishment for their misdoings.

They did know. Every day thirty top rulers of the Soviet state were provided with GPU bulletins and current reports on the situation and developments in every gubernia. Not only Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky, but also Bukharin, Kamenev and Zinovyev and less prominent revolutionaries were well aware of the desperate situation in the once rich country—Russia.

The GPU informed that in May 1922:

— the sowing campaign was begun in the localities where they managed to hide seeds;

— stealing of food cargoes have become more frequent on railways;

— strikes, caused by staff reduction, are going on in many cities;

— banditism is growing;

— the Socialist Revolutionaries have intensified propaganda;

— Red Army men are in a better mood when they get paid in time;

— the peasants' mood is being dampened by hunger;

— workers go on strike, demanding higher wages;

— several prisoners died of starvation;

— market prices are going up with every passing day;

— timber is being stolen on a growing scale;

— peasant-Communists are withdrawing from the *Patry en masse*;

— typhus epidemic in the Voronezh, scurvy in the Nizhni Novgorod, and cholera in the Yaroslavl gubernias;

— no medicines;

— a constant shortage of banknotes;

— cases of cannibalism are registered;

— Gubernia committees take measures to abolish political illiteracy;

— responsible comrades were sent to districts to organize Party schools;

— the state of affairs in militia is unsatisfactory, bribetaking is on the increase;

— an acute shortage of locomotives throughout the country;

— cooperative prices are higher than market prices;

— many Red Army men want to go home to do field work;

— the population is displeased with the requisitioning of Church valuables...

Clearly aware of the failure their policy met with, be it war communism or the notorious NEP, the organizers of the Russian bacchanalia blamed everyone for the ruin except themselves, recalling more and more often the revolutionary slogan: shoot!

The country was becoming desolate...

*Mikhail VOSTRYSHEV*



### Archpriest Mikhail Pavlovich Cheltsov His Life and Work

Archpriest Mikhail Pavlovich Cheltsov, one of the closest associates of Metropolitan Veniamin Kazansky, was sentenced to death by the decision of January 2, 1931, of the OGPU Troika in the Leningrad military district and shot on the night of January 6, 1931 (Christmas eve), in the prison in Gorokhovaya Street.

According to a witness the old man was singing Christmas troparia at his death hour, glorifying a new life. There was a rumour that on the following day an order came from Moscow to discharge the prisoner in the absence of corpus delicti, however, it was only in late 1988 that his sons received a document certifying that Mikhail Pavlovich Cheltsov was fully exonerated posthumously.

Such was the lot of many in those years. What kind of a man was he? What did he leave us, his descendants?

Mikhail Cheltsov was born in 1870 into the family of a priest in the village of Kikino, Ryazhsk Uyezd, Korablinskaya Volost, Ryazan Gubernia. At the age of 20 he graduated from the Ryazan Theological Seminary, and in 1890 became a student of the Kazan Theological Academy, which he graduated from in 1894 with the degree of Candidate of Theology and the right to compete for the degree of Magister without an oral examination—a good result at that time.

From November 1894 till the end of 1898 he taught the history of the Russian Old Believers' schism at the Kaluga Theological Seminary. At that period he devoted much of his time to missionary work: trips about the diocese, acquaintance with the population and its views, with the activity of local sects, studying possibilities of their joining Orthodoxy. This work resulted in a series of articles on Old Believers and sects of the Kaluga Diocese published in the *Kaluga Diocesan Gazette*. He was also an active member of the Apostle St. John the Divine Brotherhood. In November 1896

M. Cheltsov became the director and teacher of the missionary antischismatic courses opened by the Brotherhood and totalling 50 members. The aim of the courses as formulated by Cheltsov was "...to prepare from former Old Believers and the Orthodox, wishing to help the mission, assistants for parish priests in their struggle against the schism". At the 3rd All-Russia Missionary Congress held in 1897 in Kazan M. Cheltsov, a member of the Kaluga Diocese delegation, attracted everybody's attention as "...rather experienced both in the theory and practice of missionary work and a skilful polemist on the problems of schism and sects", as the *Missionary Review* noted (June-August 1897, p. 705).

History was one of Cheltsov's major interests, the history of his own Kaluga Diocese in particular. His thorough research work based on the materials from the Holy Synod's archives resulted in an article "On the History of the Foundation of the Kaluga Diocese" published in the *Kaluga Diocesan Gazette* (No. 19, 1897, pp. 543-553; No. 20, pp. 573-581). The author gave the history of the diocese and proved that it had been actually formed much earlier than the official version suggested.

Cheltsov also did much for the preservation of different ancient church articles. In his report to the consistory Cheltsov wrote that the Kaluga Diocese populated with Old Believers since olden times had a lot of ancient churches with numerous church antiquities in them which were out of use and neglected. He suggested that these antiquities, very important from the archeological point of view, be gathered and preserved, the Theological Seminary being "the most proper place for the purpose". The report was approved by Bishop Makary of Kaluga and Borovsk and the consistory ordered "to send the above-mentioned antiquities" to the Seminary.

On October 11, 1899, M. Cheltsov



Father Mikhail Cheltsov. Petrograd, mid-1960s (St. Daniel's Monastery museum)

defended the Master's thesis on the theme "The Church of the Kingdom of Serbia After She Acquired Autocephaly (1879-1898)". Prof. I. Berdnikov and Docent V. Kerensky, who acted as opponents, in their article, which came out in the *Orthodox Interlocutor* in March 1900 (Supplement Nos. 7-8), noted, first of all, that the work presented was more of an historical than canonical character, and that the decisions of the Serbian Church were cited with such precision that the work could be used as source material for Russian theologians. It was also noted that "... a considerable part of information was received by the author through private correspondence with some Serbian high church and public figures" (I. Berdnikov). "The author has studied not only all Russian publications concerning the theme, but also foreign sources, Serbian, first of all, and, partly, German..." (V. Kerensky). This first serious work by Cheltsov was published in the same year.

In 1898 M. Cheltsov left for St. Petersburg. From 1899 he was a missionary of the St. Petersburg diocese where there

were only two missionaries at the time—an antisectarian missionary and an antischismatic one (M. Cheltsov). He travelled much about the diocese, visited churches, schools, villages. The invariable aim of his work was to prepare helpers for the antischismatic missionary activity. His work "Apologetical Material in the Course of Catechetics for One-Grade Parish Schools in Places Inhabited by Old Believers" was of considerable help for priests and teachers of catechetics in public schools. In October 1901 he organized missionary courses for laymen and published an article "On the Improvement of Pastoral and Missionary Training of Students of Theological Seminaries". The article was a response of a practical missionary activist to the meeting of the Holy Synod on this question in June 1900. The author wrote: "First and foremost it is necessary to take the pupil out of the dead desert which is his life in the Seminary, to breathe new life into our theological educational institutions... It is necessary to acquaint pupils of senior grades with the people, with their life and spiritual needs, it is important to acquaint them with schism in reality..." (*Missionary Review*, March 1901, pp. 298-309).

At that period of time M. Cheltsov wrote more than 30 articles for the *Missionary Review* of which he was assistant editor-in-chief. They were mostly reviews of books and sketches on the life of sects. There was also a number of serious articles among them which should be mentioned: "On the Division of Russian Sects into Rationalistic and Mystic Ones" (March 1902), "On Schism, Sectarianism and Mission According to Statistics Data" (April 1902), "Our Scientists' Opinion on New Church-Historical Testimonies on the Ancient Origin of the Two-Finger Sign of the Cross" (1900), "Yedinoverie [Old Believers' sect—Tr.]—Its Hundred-Year Existence in the Russian Orthodox Church" (1900).

Of special interest is Cheltsov's work "Yedinoverie and the Union" (*Missionary Review*, November 1901, pp. 502-512; December 1901, pp. 746-751). Russian Yedinoverie and Roman Catholic Union are analysed there as church-historical phenomena with all their similarities and differences.

In 1902 M. Cheltsov married Anna Aglamazova, the daughter of a village priest from the Ryazan Gubernia, with





*Father Pavel Cheltsov with his son Mikhail Cheltsov. St. Petersburg, beginning of the 20th century*

whom he lived to his last days, and the Lord gave them seven children. From the letters to his wife one can see how much attention did Cheltsov pay to his family, to the upbringing of his children.

From September 1903 Cheltsov served at the domestic church of the Hieromartyr St. Simeon Institute.

From 1903 to 1905 Cheltsov worked much in the *Orthodox Guide* monthly magazine as co-editor-in-chief and co-publisher. All his works published since that time till 1918 comprise mostly articles on missionary activities, on questions of teaching and manuals.

From 1906 M. Cheltsov was on the board of the Orthodox Philanthropic Society of Zealots of Faith and Charity. Its aims were: 1) help to the poor through allowances, finding of working places, opening of primary schools, almshouses and homes for the aged; 2) moral and material support for those wishing to adopt Orthodoxy as well as missionary activity. The society had a chapel, a church, one-grade parish school and an orphanage. It organized public disputes, theological readings and missionary classes.

On March 17, 1908, the St. Petersburg clergy gathered for a discussion of a report by diocesan missionary D. Bogolyubsky on the theme "Church and Social Problems Brought Forth in the Life of the Capital by the Sectarian Movement". It was a heated discussion, M. Cheltsov being the first to take the floor. According to the *News of the St. Petersburg Diocese* (1908, Nos. 6-7, p. 57), Cheltsov stressed that it was not ignorance that drew Christians to sects but the bent for religious criticism, which showed a certain cultural and educational level, not viciousness or moral infirmity, but the search for the Truth of Christ in life. Besides it was the incompatibility of our clergy with the ideal that promoted sectarianism in the Orthodox Church. Hence the measures suggested by Cheltsov to oppose sectarians: 1) raising of the moral level of the Orthodox clergy; 2) preaching of nothing but pure truth in church; and 3) building of our life on the evangelical basis.

In October 1908 a Missionary Council of the St. Petersburg Diocese was founded, of which M. Cheltsov became a member. Ten district sections of the council were opened. The district which included the Ascension Church, Michael the Archangel Church in Kolomna, the Protecting Veil Church in Kolomna, Church of the Saviour in Sennaya St., as well as all the diocesan domestic churches within their precincts were placed under Cheltsov's supervision.

Along with his missionary activity M. Cheltsov taught theology at the Institute of Civil Engineers in St. Petersburg, and in private high schools. One of the latter, a high school for girls, was known to have no compulsory lessons of catechetics and no percentage norm for Jews. There was a considerable number of children of revolutionary intelligentsia among its pupils. The auditorium during Cheltsov's lectures was always filled to capacity for they were interesting: no scholasticism, a lot of discussions and disputes. People of different religious confessions, as well as atheists, used to attend them.

Cheltsov, a popular pedagogue, was often invited to lecture at various courses and in different towns. His pedagogical talent and rich experience in teaching both children and adults helped him write and publish a number of manuals on catechetics for teachers of

primary schools, high schools and institutes. In 1917, by the decision of the Holy Synod Publishing Department Council, Archpriest Cheltsov's work "Requirements to Modern Pedagogy Regarding Religious Education" was published. The first part of the book titled "Should Catechetics Be Taught at School?" proves that the religious education helps to promote harmonious development of all spiritual forces of man. The second part "Is It Possible to Substitute Morals for Catechetics at School?" shows that morals without religion is vague, unauthoritative, influenced by dominant political tendencies and leads to crime growth.

In the second half of 1916 the Petrograd Catechetization Brotherhood was formed numbering more than 200 members. In July 1917 the 2nd All-Russia Catechetization Congress took place in Petrograd which elected the Council of 12 members with M. Cheltsov at the head. The primary task of the council was to take all measures possible to prevent the withdrawal of catechetics from the school compulsory curriculum. The decree on the freedom of conscience issued by the Provisional Government in July 1917 and the intention to withdraw catechetics from school curriculum resulted in heated discussions in the state committee at the Ministry of Public Education. In his speech on August 3, 1917, Cheltsov said: "Freedom of conscience means the right for every citizen to choose a confession. But having chosen one and belonging to it he has a moral obligation to obey the rules of his religion. It cannot be otherwise. If members of a society are not united by means of a certain status or directives the society does not exist. And my last reason is conditioned by today's situation. It seems to me that today when the rule of force is domineering, when a problem can be solved with the help of a fist, when discord is so frequent an occurrence, it would be better to wait a little with this draft law for tactical reasons. Some laymen say about this draft law: 'We won't let this happen,' and the phrase may imply the use of force. We, pedagogues, must pacify, bring to accord, hence to avoid discord on one more question we should postpone the discussion on making catechetics optional. The Russian people are against it. They must be

criticizing us, priests, but it is not because they are against religion but because we are poor pastors. Divine Law is the soul of the people, the core of their life. And let us not touch it in order not to bring misfortune to the Russian people... Undoubtedly, faith is not a must. Faith is free. It is a matter of the soul. Force is inadmissible here. If there were people among us who thought and acted differently they are our shame and we resolutely dissociate ourselves from them. But the compulsory teaching of catechetics is a different thing. Faith is free indeed. It cannot be imposed. But if it is adopted and becomes part of me I am internally forced, so to say, to make it stronger and clearer to me. And that should be the purpose of catechetics."

This speech was published in the monthly *Religion and School* founded by the council in November 1917. Archpriest Mikhail Cheltsov and Vitaly Lebedev were its editors. The 2nd All-Russia Catechetization Congress resolved that the journal should help solve religio-pedagogical problems concerning the teaching of catechetics and serve the interests of the family, the school and the teachers. The journal became the main publication of the council. It covered the questions of teaching catechetics in secondary secular educational establishments, teaching of children to pray, religious enlightenment of adults, religio-moral upbringing of the people. The topical theme of the journal was the necessity of the compulsory teaching of catechetics at school.

After the October revolution the situation dramatically changed. In January 1918 the Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State and of the School from the Church was published, and instructions were sent to schools to stop catechetics lessons. Parents' committees, the *Religion and School* journal, St. Petersburg Brotherhood of Catechetics Teachers and other organizations decided to continue their struggle "until physical force is used against them". However, the forces in this struggle were unequal. In the summer of 1918 the journal came off the press for the last time.

Of the greatest significance among the works by Cheltsov published in the journal were: "The Aim and Ideal of Upbringing" (1917, No. 1, pp. 6-11), "Freedom of Conscience and Studying of Religion at School" (1917, No. 2,





*Father Mikhail Cheltsov's family*

pp. 101-106), "Intellectualism and Voluntarism" (1918, No. 3, pp. 131-139), "Formation of Character and Catechetics" (1918, No. 5, pp. 257-264). Dwelling on the formation of character of a child the author draws the conclusion that "...first and foremost one should take into consideration the pupil's soul, bring to life and strengthen noble impulses and moral habits and through them form a solid, moral character, create an integral, harmonious personality". (*Religion and School*, 1918, No. 3. p. 139). Besides the journal published reviews of textbooks and manuals on catechetics for teachers. Above all the council provided material help for the teachers in need and helped some of them find work.

One more work should be mentioned in connection with Archpriest Mikhail Cheltsov's pedagogical activity. It is his speech "The Main Task of Higher Education" with which he addressed the students of the Institute of Civil Engineers of Emperor Nicholas I after the moleben at the beginning of the academic year on September 1, 1904. It was published as a separate booklet, and then republished in 1922 by the *Moscow University* newspaper under the title "A Real Man". The speech delivered in 1904

touched upon basic human values and appears to be as useful to people at the end of the century. In conclusion addressing the first-year students M. Cheltsov said: "Gentlemen! Now, at the threshold of a new life, prayerfully asking for Divine help, give a pledge to recall this very important moment as frequently as possible and each time crossing the real threshold of the institute, think of the responsibility you come to shoulder upon receiving a higher education. Remember that the main aim of the education you are going to receive is the formation of a real man with a sound mind and an open heart, possessing a will to use the abilities of both his mind and heart for the benefit of others. This is to be the basis of your profession, and you will then be not only good workers but will also bring benefit to the Russian man and earn his sincere gratitude."

After the revolution M. Cheltsov lectured at the Theological Institute—the only theological educational establishment in Soviet Russia training clergymen. Since July 1919, after the decree on closing down of domestic churches came out and teaching of catechetics and theology at schools and higher educational estab-

ishments was banned, M. Cheltsov served as rector of the Trinity Cathedral in Izmailovsky Avenue.

As to M. Cheltsov's church service, it began in Kaluga where he actively participated in the work of the Brotherhood of Apostle St. John the Divine. In 1903-1904, in St. Petersburg, he worked at the office of the Ober-procurator of the Holy Synod. In 1911 by the decision of the St. Petersburg diocesan administration he was appointed assistant superintendent dean of the 1st city district entrusted with the supervision over churches and clergy. The life and needs of the city clergy was the theme of a number of articles by Cheltsov and the reason of his joining the circle of St. Petersburg priests organized in 1905 and named first "32", then Union of Church Renovation and finally Union of Zealots of Church Renovation. The union consisted of church and secular activists whose ideas and work had nothing in common with the Obnovlentsy (Renovationists) movement which was formed later and led to the split in the Orthodox Church and the organization of HCA (Higher Church Administration) to substitute for the Patriarch.

In his unpublished work "What Is the Cause of the Church Ruin?" (1918-1928) Cheltsov wrote about the circle "32": "Today's church ruin. Where does it come from? Where is its root and beginning? Some say that the beginning of it is the very first years of this century, that the root of it is that very church movement represented by the so-called '32', that it is mainly our late Metropolitan Antony who is to blame for it. I had to hear out this opinion from our today's Metropolitan Serafim... This opinion is partly true... the daring to speak on one's own behalf, openly and freely, even to consider the objection to the bishop or metropolitan as one's own right or, rather, duty, to have one's own view of both church and diocesan affairs, to realize oneself as an active helper to the ruling bishop—all this our St. Petersburg clergy did reveal under Metropolitan Antony... the late Metropolitan Antony permitted all this and many other things not to please the clergy, for it was too uninfluential even in their own parishes; not to gain its support in his struggle with Pobedonostsev, for one word of Pobedonostsev was enough then to smash this circle of priests; not because of his own spiritual weakness, for he was a man of strong character and of great authority—he permitted all this clearly realizing what the clergy should have done then and

what it began to do; he realized that the most tactful and useful step for the Church would be to take the emergent movement of the clergy in his, metropolitan's, hands and thus discipline the clergy and help it avoid certain deviations undesirable for the diocese and dangerous for some clergymen themselves. That is why under Metropolitan Antony the city clergy was in complete filial subordination to him full of sincere desire to work in his spirit and according to his instructions."

Circles of priests were appearing not in St. Petersburg alone but also in Moscow and Kiev. Cheltsov wrote about it: "The St. Petersburg clergy was always considered to be and actually was progressive in the best sense of the word. Moving in the circle of intelligentsia of the highest ideological level and thanks to this fact alone thinking not only of their daily bread and ambitions, living in the centre of the supreme church authority and noting involuntarily all defects of church life and administration, St. Petersburg clergymen—especially numerous representatives of the so-called domestic churches—could not help suffering because of the abnormalities of church life and strive for their elimination... Unlike them, the Moscow clergy was largely in merchant environment, while clergymen in Kiev and other cities were even less cultured, they never saw but just heard of Synodal disgraceful practices. Besides they were more interested in practical life than in high ideas." This difference could be clearly seen in the character of work of the Moscow clergy circle organized after the example of the St. Petersburg "32". The latter worked mostly for the establishment of higher principles of church life: Sobornost, patriotism, the rights and conditions of bishops, laymen etc...

In 1906 the *Church Herald* (No. 6, p. 187) published the charter of the Union of Zealots of Church Renovation (initially called "32") the main aim of which was "...to serve the cause of renovation of church life... to seek the separation of the idea of the Church itself from any state ideas and liberation of church life from subordination to the state and other transient institutions of man,... elimination of class and group privileges in serving the Church."

In the same year the union published its works under the title "For the Church Council" comprising its suggestions on church reform. On the commission from the union M. Cheltsov wrote an article





*The 1922 trial over "churchmen" at the former Noblemen's Assembly Hall (philarmony). In the centre — Metropolitan Veniamin, to the left — Archpriest Chukov, to the right — Bishop Venedikt, extreme right — Archpriest M. Cheltsov, next to him Archpriest Bogoyavlensky. Photo published in 1991*

"The Essence of Church Renovation" published in 1907. He wrote: "Renovation does not mean the appearance of something new... one can renovate only something already existing... Hence, the task of church renovationists is not the re-creation of the Church as Divine body but the rebirth of her human element... renovationists must with all the means available to them promote the only desirable and the best reform of church administration." Bishop Sergy Larin wrote about this article: "...Esteemed Archpriest Cheltsov like Metropolitan Antony sought the renovation of the inner man. Such a form of renovation was congenial with Holy Orthodoxy, it answered the vital interests of Orthodox society; it is progressive and cannot but have been welcomed... Archpriest Cheltsov remained faithful to Orthodoxy."

On October 12, 1907, the Congress of the Clergy and Church Wardens of the St. Petersburg Diocese began its work. A so-called "Note of 16" was submitted for the consideration of the congress. It was signed by 12 priests and 4 church wardens who wrote: "...the attitude of believers towards the Church and the Orthodox faith becomes cooler from year to year... The

centuries-old tradition of church life led to complete dissociation of the pastors from the flock... The teaching of catechetics at public schools is inadequate to the people's needs." The "Note..." was published together with a covering letter by Cheltsov. "What can be more painful for all people of faith", he wrote, "clergy in the first place, than today's indifference of society towards faith and the Church? What can be harder for the zealots of the Church, especially for her pastors, than to see her once faithful children falling apart from the Church?" The letter is full of pain and desire to work for the benefit of faith and the Church.

The same pain is felt in the letter sent by Cheltsov in 1922 from prison to his wife: "Church affairs seem to become more and more complicated. New parties and divisions are appearing. Whom will it do good? The public enmity to the 'Living Church' and its hierarchs seems to become more and more evident. But will it not cool down our Orthodox, drive them off from this or that temple first and then from the Church herself?! Some are already embracing Roman Catholicism; some must be joining sectarians. Will Orthodoxy gather strength?! I feel pain for the Church of

God, the more so as it is not the ideas but the clergy's pride that has led to this ruin: everybody wants to be the first and the highest."

In 1918 the Diocesan Council under Metropolitan Veniamin was organized to administer church life in Petrograd. It existed till the early 1920s, M. Cheltsov being its chairman. The activity in the council gave Cheltsov much information about church life, thus helping him in the work on the above-mentioned article "What Is the Cause of the Church Ruin?" It abounds in interesting facts and detailed characteristics of many prominent church figures of that time (Metropolitans Iosif and Antony, Bishops Manuil, Grigory, Venedikt, Serafim, Aleksey, Gavriil, Nikolai and others), description and assessment of the activity of Renovationists' groups.

As we can see, Archpriest Mikhail Cheltsov was a prominent figure among the Petrograd clergy. That was the main reason for numerous searches in his apartment beginning from 1918 and five arrests till 1922.

From June 10 to July 5, 1922, the so-called "trial over churchmen", took place in Leningrad. Over a hundred priests and laymen with Metropolitan Veniamin at the head were accused of "counteraction" to the confiscation of church valuables for the victims of famine in the Povolzhye Region. Archpriest Mikhail Cheltsov and his 18-year-old son Pavel were among them. Ten of the accused, Cheltsov among them, were sentenced to be executed by shooting. For 40 days they awaited the execution. Then M. Cheltsov wrote his "Reminiscences of the Condemned Man". His death penalty was substituted for five years in prison. In December 1923 M. Cheltsov's term of imprisonment expired. When freed he served in several churches and from April 1924 was rector of the Church of Michael the Archangel in Kolomna till his final arrest and execution in August 1930.

G. CHELTSOV,  
A. MASTERKOV,  
L. CHELTSOVA

*Archpriest Mikhail Cheltsov*

## Science and Religion

**EDITOR'S NOTE.** The apologetical work by Father Mikhail Cheltsov published in this issue (slightly abridged) carries an imprint of time. In the beginning of the 20th century fundamental discoveries in physics led to the crisis of the classical science of the new time and changed considerably the bases of the scientific thought proper ("scientific revolution"). The crisis resulted also in certain shifts in respect of science on the whole—towards relativism (tomorrow's laws of science will be different from those of today) and positivism (from the grand picture of the world the scientific theory turned into a transient "means" of describing experience). The above-mentioned gnosiological difficulties were later overcome.

The cardinal idea of Father Mikhail's work is the presence of faith in scientific research.

### I. Can Science Renounce Religion?

1. We constantly come across the following expressions: science has proved... science admits... science renounces... and

the like. Such expressions are used especially often to contrapose science to religion, to show that religion is renounced by science. In that case science is regarded as something sacred, of the highest authority, something universally recognized, something that should be taken unquestioningly and with reverence. So, what is science?

To get an answer to this question let us turn to a generally recognized source—the encyclopaedia by Brokhaus and Efron. Let us look up the definition of the word "science" in it: "Science in its general meaning is a whole complex of information subjected to some mental verification and put in certain systematic order, beginning with theology, metaphysics, pure mathematics and ending up with a teaching on the cavalry horse shoe".

As we can see science is defined as a complex of any information subjected only to some mental verification and systematized. So, all kind of information more or



less verified and grounded when systematized can already be called a science. That means that science does not carry the seal of truth, especially of absolute truth; no higher revelation, universal recognition or thorough grounding and approbation are needed for its theses to be considered scientific, just "some verification". Not only certain universally recognized, undoubted discoveries and theses but also all kind of information subjected only to verification and systematization can be called scientific truth. Can such "information" be called absolute truth? Can it be the basis for solving such vitally important problems as the origin of the world and man, for instance? Can it be the ground for saying that science, i. e., just certain data subjected to some mental verification, has proved one thing, renounced another one, etc.? Can it, or a science based on it, be contraposed to religion, any religion, speaking on behalf of Divine Being, on behalf of Absolute Truth and providing the most trustworthy information? The answer is evidently negative.

Besides, science cannot be contraposed to religion because, as we can see from the above-mentioned definition, science is information, from the sphere of theology in particular, which works out, i. e., subjects to some mental verification and puts in systematic order what religion tells about the world and man. Science is all kind of information, not excluding theological or religious information.

Hence, science as something integral, strictly defined and systematized, as a collection of some truths does not exist. It is clear even from the definition given in the encyclopaedia. "In reality only certain special sciences exist": mathematical, natural, humanitarian and other sciences. So when one speaks on behalf of science, it is not one, non-existent science, but just a particular—natural, mathematical or historical—science. Each of these sciences has its own postulates which it passes for scientific ones. But how truthful and valuable is the data provided by these sciences?

A well-known Socialist-Bolshevik writer Lunacharsky wrote in his two-volume work "Religion and Socialism" that science "never gives any certainty, only possibility... Science can never guarantee that these laws are absolute. When we say: 'in ten or in a thousand years the Earth will revolve on its axis', we only express a possibility to the greatest degree".

A natural scientist Gernet wrote on his part: "We are living through at present (the 1910s) an interesting transition period in science: the old bases are being shaken while the new ones are still at the initial stage of formation." So, scientific data is none other than probable, more or less reliable assertions, hypotheses (Philosopher Hartman's words) existing in a certain period of time and often overthrown afterwards.

The first years of our century were the time of such an overthrow of old bases supported by hypotheses alone and assertion of new ones also based on hypotheses. How can we rely on such truths and, relying on them, destroy the holy of holies—religious faith of man?

Scientific truths cannot be permanent, or, all the more, eternal by nature. Science is said to be progressing, moving forward, developing. It means that receiving from the outer world and from the spiritual world of man proper new information and evidence it revises its former postulates on those grounds, throwing away everything not corresponding to that information and evidence or contrary to them, and builds new hypotheses and theories. Science is constant progress, constant search for and opening of the new, science is not static, it is fluid. And if it is at a standstill, based on its hypotheses alone, without searching for new ones, it is not science any more. Therefore, by its very essence, science rejects what is often attributed to it: assertion of some unshakable, unchanged truths; its truths are assertions true for a certain period of time, or, to be more exact, assertions of certain scientists, whom the rest agree with for a certain period of time. The history of science is a convincing proof of our opinion.

It was not so long ago that the separateness of matter and energy was considered one of the most evident and basic truths. Now it comes to be one of the greatest illusions.

Who could doubt it several years ago that everything was built on atoms? Today's truth is that atom can also be split, that it is a most intricate system of small particles of matter—electrons...

An evident conclusion is:

1. One, universally recognized science does not exist, there are separate sciences: mathematics, natural, and other sciences, theological among them.

2. These separate sciences, each in its sphere, do not offer absolutely reliable

inferences either, but only more or less probable information and assertions.

3. That is why these assertions are constantly changing: some are being rejected as obsolete, others are being introduced as more reliable, to be rejected in due time.

## II. On the Laws of Nature

All the universe lives in accordance with the laws of nature. They are exact, immutable, permanent and invariable, and nothing can be or happen contrary to them. That is why it is allegedly out of place to speak of the works of God in the world: the laws of nature do not permit them. And God Himself does not have any place anywhere according to these laws. The one recognizing the laws of nature cannot recognize God. And since one cannot but recognize these laws one cannot but reject God. This is logic, as they say, with its inexorable deductions and requirements. All this is being discussed very often and on behalf of science, i. e., an authority which cannot be questioned for fear of being taken for an ignoramus. But is it really so? How do scholars themselves regard the laws? To what extent do they consider them reliable? A scientist, Vebster by name, having studied the meanings attributed to the words "the laws of nature" found out that the word "law" had 27 meanings and the word "nature"—12.

One thinker considers a law to be the succession of natural phenomena to be observed. Another one states that though the law means the succession of phenomena, the succession is determined by the action of forces, absolutely unknown to us. According to the third, a law can only be applied to some forces the number of which is more or less determined and known. Some thinkers say that laws can be applied only to combinations of forces for certain purposes. Others, on the contrary, think that the word "law" can be applied to abstract notions alone.

Such great diversity of opinions on the meaning of the words "the laws of nature" shows that these words cannot imply something steady, definite, invariable all the more. Science or scholars, to be more exact, using these words mean mostly not something universally understood and recognized, but something they themselves think to be more true and acceptable. Thus, the laws of nature have not

avoided the lot of subjective interpretation and acceptance.

Scientists more or less agree on what the words "the laws of nature" should not mean. Thus, laws are not the essence of the cause. They can initiate, or cause, or oppose nothing. They are not even the forces of nature, acting in it. The laws being the invariable succession of phenomena cannot be the initiators or the creators of something in nature by themselves.

So what are the laws of nature?...

If the laws of nature are a "description of similarities" of the observed phenomena, if they are a "convenient means of presenting systematized data" then they are none other than processed and systematized, temporary, casual information about the physical world. According to Jevonson, an English scientist, each law acts for a more or less considerable period of time. The same view is expressed by geologist Lapparon: "Any physical law is temporary, and relative, and rough at the same time." And there exists a rather interesting and important book on this problem by a French writer Routrou the title of which "On Casualty of the Laws of Nature" speaks for itself.

Any law is true for its time, for a certain period in the development of science, until the reality refutes it. "A physical law", according to Professor Khvolson from Petrograd, "is true only within certain limits". At any time the progress of human knowledge can reveal its falsity, for forces and phenomena can be discovered which, being exceptions from this or that law of nature, will kill it, turn it into an obsolete speculation, conjecture of the human mind...

So scientists themselves expose the instability, casualty and temporary character of the laws of nature. It follows that they cannot be regarded as absolutely true and serve as a basis for indisputable conclusions. So how can one say that the laws of nature explain everything in nature? That they leave no place for the works of God?

## III. Faith in Life and Science

Enemies of religion usually adduce the argument that religion is based on faith and not on exact evidence. And faith, in its turn, is an inner state, unsteady and fickle. Usually faith, in order to humiliate it, is contraposed to knowledge. Indeed, many



of the religious dogmata are based on faith. But is it in religion alone that faith is present? Can science do without faith? Does not faith play a great role in our everyday life?

If we care to pay greater attention to our everyday life we would be surprised to see how great is the role of faith in it in general (we are not speaking of religious faith, of course, but of faith proper as a phenomenon of our spiritual life).

It is the faith in the durability of our house, built by the architect, alone that makes us live in it without constant checking its reliability. It is the faith that the earth will not yawn under our feet alone that makes the man walk on it. Man works today only because he believes in the morrow; he lives consciously only because he believes in a better future. And if man doubted one of the above-mentioned things just for a minute he would become the most miserable creature and his life on earth would become impossible. Not for nothing do we consider suspicious and mistrustful people, who do not believe others, the unhappiest and poorest beings. Misanthropy is the lot of such people. Faith is of no less importance in our everyday life. Nine-tenths of everything we know we take on trust, believing first our parents, then tutors, and, finally, text-books and books on the whole. We have the knowledge in the sphere of geography and ethnography only because we trust travellers and researchers. It is only because we believe written documents and archeological data, i. e., people, that we can study history. And who will dare to assert that everything they inform us of is an absolute truth which we ourselves can verify? Even if we can verify certain things it is only an insignificant group of people that is able to do it. As to the information received from numerous geographers, historians and representatives of many other spheres of knowledge practically every day, we become witnesses of its mutability, i. e., unauthenticity, when we read something new about things well known to us, introducing corrections, rejecting the old and accepting the new which at times is cardinally different. It is supposed to be the progress of knowledge. So everything we know is to be substituted by a new knowledge, which we again take on trust, believing people on the grounds they suggest. And in vain, for it is groundless to think that sciences, even the most exact

ones, are based on the exact, true knowledge, proved by experience and perceived by senses. To say nothing of various theories, suppositions, hypotheses, presented in abundance in every science, any science is based on faith, it is on trust that the so-called scientific axiom is taken...

Mathematics is considered to be the most exact of all sciences. But nowhere in experience does it find either space or time. Basing all its theories on them and proceeding from them it takes them on trust, regarding them simply as notions, the result of rationalistic cognition. Teaching on ether, on the essence of electricity and light, the theory on electrons are all based on faith. A well-known physicist, Professor Khvolson from Petrograd wrote about the role of faith in physics in his work "Knowledge and Faith in Physics". The most important part of physics dealing with the explanation of phenomena, he says, is based on pure faith with no knowledge at all. It can be seen very well from the fact that a hypothesis is often accepted by one group of scientists, which means that they believe in it, and rejected by the other, who do not believe in it. An even better illustration is the fact that very often there exist many different hypotheses to explain one and the same group of phenomena, the choice among them often depending on personal qualities, propensities and convictions of the one who makes the choice.

Hypotheses are a sphere of pure faith, with no knowledge involved whatsoever. And finally our knowledge itself is based on faith to a great extent. Making this or that conclusion in the sphere of our mental inferences we believe that our mind has not cheated us, that it worked on the basis of sufficient data, that the process of its work itself answers the laws of logic and reality, that nothing wrong has interfered in this work. But when we speak of the truthfulness of its conclusions we forget that they are always subjective. Why is one and the same subject regarded differently by two different persons, this being the reason of constant arguments among the most esteemed people on matters which seem to be self-evident? It happens according to Professor Khvolson because "the first source of one's knowledge, i. e., personal experience and observations, is wholly based on self-trust". In a word, as Professor S. Bulgakov from Moscow put it, "there is faith in every act of cognition".

And, according to Carlyle, man lives by faith alone and not by reasoning. And if we see to the heart of knowledge we will find out that faith is the basis of it also, hence faith cannot be a subjective feeling, changing under the influence of a mood. Faith is no less objective than the knowledge coming from it which is usually passed for an ideal of objectivity of a scientific truth. One can hardly imagine that science, proceeding from theses based on belief, proceeds from the subjective alone without any objectivity in the heart of it. It would kill any science, it would also be bad for life, for the latter cannot do without faith. This is the first conclusion from the above-said, Carlyle continues, and here is the second one: if science cannot do without faith what is wrong with religion which is also based on faith? Admitted as inevitable in science, faith is quite legitimate in religion. And no matter how much it depreciates the authority and reliability of scientific inferences and assertions, what grounds are there to speak of the groundlessness of religious dogmata based on faith?

Thus, faith is the most natural, legitimate and necessary phenomenon of the spiritual life of man, even the life of the soul itself, and man can never and under no circumstances do without it. His spiritual life in faith leads him to the greatest purely scientific discoveries on the one hand, and draws him closer to God and life eternal in His Kingdom, on the other. It brings him joy and happiness in the earthly life on the one hand, and gives him a pleasant hope for the future bliss on the other.

One should not protest against religious faith, for it is just a part of faith in general, but strengthen it so that the strength of faith may, with the most efficiency, lead man to the greatest sum of the good things of life.

#### IV. Faith and Religion

Faith is blind, it does not reason, the touch of a critical mind to its postulates is inadmissible, that is why it cannot give true knowledge—that is what they usually say against religious faith in order to depreciate it. But is it just to say so? What is the relation between religious faith and human mind?

Like any faith, religious faith can really be blind, prohibiting all reasoning and men-

tal verification of its doctrines. Such is the faith of uncultured, ignorant, primitive people. But speaking of religious faith we do not mean this kind of faith. We should speak of faith in its essence, its actual nature. We should speak of Christian faith. It is afraid of no light, no analysis, it welcomes them, it becomes stronger and better founded with their help. The Saviour Himself addressing the Jews commanded that they should *search the Scriptures* (Jn. 5. 39), i. e., study and analyse, which is possible with the help of active work of the human mind alone. Apostle St. Paul himself being well-educated, in the sphere of Hellenic wisdom in particular, taught his disciple Timothy to *take heed to the doctrine* (1 Tim. 4. 16), *give attention to reading* (1 Tim. 4. 13); he told Titus, his other disciple, to *speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine* (Tit. 2. 1) *only and avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless* (Tit. 3. 9).

From the first days of its existence the Christian Church was in the closest relations to the light of the human mind. Suffice it to mention such great teachers and writers of the Church, and prominent scholars at the same time, as Sts. Justin the Martyr, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil the Great, and many others who were not only Christians of true and strong faith but also drew Christian faith closer to the human mind, lit faith with it and founded many things in faith on its fruits. Their belief was zealous and sincere but reasonable at the same time, they explained the postulates of Christian faith with the help of the laws of logic and psychology. They themselves preached it consciously and reasonably and commanded us not to be blind in faith. *Hear and understand* (Mt. 15.10)—by these words of the Saviour the Church teaches us how to treat our faith in the aspect of the searching mind. We should adopt our faith through comprehension. A Christian should learn to believe not just trusting his teachers' words, no matter how great an authority they may be, but also drawing faith closer to his reasoning mind.

There is nothing in our faith to be hidden from the light of reason. There is nothing contrary to reason in its teachings, everything in it is well accepted, justified and comprehended by our mind. All our



Christian faith is wholly and absolutely reasonable.

Let us take, for example, Christian teaching on the Triune God. How much is being light-mindedly said about its being contrary to reason. However, in reality, if there is God (God is an All-Perfect and thus Personal Being), He cannot be all alone. For personal being is certainly a living being for it lives and reveals itself in everything, through its relations with somebody or something else. It means that a person to be alive needs the existence of another being. But we can think of God as of One only. And here we seem to have a contradiction between the two notions—those of the Living God and of One God. The teaching on the Triunity removes this contradiction: God is One but not alone, He is Triune in His three Persons. The teaching on the Triunity of God, being the mystery of His life, fully satisfies our inquisitive mind and gives an exhaustive notion of Divine Being.

One more example: what arouses much perplexity and surprise among the light-minded unfaithful is the teaching on the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. At the same time, it is the only conception of our Saviour that our mind may accept, for it was only a man, sinless at that, that could save humanity; a sinful man cannot save even himself, while the salvation of man by God would be just a redemption, forgiveness of his sins. No man is born sinless because of the original sin. Hence, the indispensable condition of the salvation of man from sin is the virgin birth of the Son of God, who had no human father and was conceived by the Blessed Virgin (becoming through Her Son of Man) by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is not a single point in the Christian teaching which would not be accepted and justified by our reason, which would be hostile or contrary to it. However, it does not mean, of course, that our faith could be wholly translated into the language of reason and logically proved. Such a rationalistic approach would kill faith proper, would turn it into sophistry, would become scholasticism. Faith justified by reason cannot be proved, however, like mathematical or any other scientific truths. "Faith is the way of knowledge without proof, without logical knowledge", Professor S. Bulgakov wrote. According to him, it is, figuratively speaking, "throwing the end of the thread

of life into the sky with confidence that it will hang from there without any fixing". Faith is not the logical data, but the intimate life of the soul, it is in full accordance with reason but does not need to be proved. It is the phenomenon of the heavenly sphere of being, it is the fact of spiritual experience and zeal of man. Reasonable in its justification, it is above reason in its content. Walking hand in hand with reason along the path of being mastered by man, influencing him, it is the expression, the manifestation of the Higher, superhuman Reason. Faith cannot do without reason; it is not a guide for it but a weapon, faith takes it to the heavenly abode, with its help kindles its fire and fills the vessels of logical formulae and reasonable justifications. Philosopher Malbrani said: "Faith is given to us to direct all the abilities of our mind as well as all our senses." That is why, as Pascal put it, "the mind must finally realize that there is a multitude of things which are above it" being the sphere of faith...

### V. Faith and Its Attitude Towards Knowledge

Faith accompanies man everywhere, science also cannot do without faith. But faith is not the blind trust of man, it can and must be reasonable. What is it then and what is its attitude towards knowledge? The best definition of faith in general, and of religious faith in particular, we find in Apostle St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews: *faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Heb. 11. 1).

In a well-known school text-book on catechetics these words are interpreted in the following way: "Faith is the evidence of things not seen as of those seen, of things hoped for and expected to be as of real ones".

This definition contains the following ideas:

1. In its nature faith is confidence, and we are confident of what is well known to us, what we are convinced of, what is our knowledge. Hence faith for everyone who possesses it means not a guess or a supposition, but the true knowledge. When I say that I believe in God, the being of God is as necessary and real to me as the being of a book lying in front of me. To shake my faith in real existence of the object of it, God, is even less possible than to make me doubt that,

say, the snow is white and the sugar is sweet, etc. The data of my faith is more authentic and true to me than the data of my outer senses even.

2. Faith extends to objects: a) invisible in their nature and b) not yet realized, but only expected and wished to be realized. It does not mean, however, that these objects are the creation of my fantasy, existing in my imagination alone, like a certain self-delusion, for my consolation. No. Though they are not yet realized until now, for me they are the most evident reality, not created by me, and obliging me to take them as a reality, without which I cannot do, without which my contemplation is not full and integral. I cannot peacefully and actively work for myself and on myself, be a reasonable person, consciously live my life without the belief in my other life. Though for me it is still something unseen, only expected, I cannot live happily and reasonably without it; for me it is a fact, though not yet realized in my life, but the most true, indispensable, necessary and the only reasonable one, filling my whole life with light and sense.

3. Thus, the main difference between knowledge and faith is that the latter is based not on the outer experience but on a certain spiritual activity. In knowledge man builds his explanation of the unknown on something known to him from the outer reality, while in faith he finds explanation within himself, from his spiritual experience, from his inner feelings and introspection—in a word from what is called our spiritual world, spiritual life.

4. Though differing from knowledge in this point, faith builds its dogmata on the same laws of logic and psychology. The human mind does not stand emptiness and in its studying of phenomena of both physical and spiritual worlds it seeks wholeness and harmony. That is why when man comes across facts not yet known to him he pauses on them with a feeling of dissatisfaction. This makes him realize and explain the unknown. If the unknown phenomenon is of the physical world and can be explained by the laws of outer senses operation then we receive what we call knowledge; if the unknown phenomenon is from the sphere of higher spiritual emotions and feelings then it can be explained through its relation to the similar phenomena and be called faith as a result. Both knowledge and faith operate one and the same laws of psychology

and logic. Trying to explain to himself the incomprehensible phenomena of the world man builds hypotheses on a whole row of formally correct conclusions comparing them with all similar phenomena known to him within the same sphere. Man thinks in full accordance with the laws of logic and in their collateral subordination: rejecting everything doubtful and contradictory, selecting only the most trustworthy, known and verified. Then the explanation given by man is not a hypothesis any more but a trustworthy, resolute affirmation of the truth, being the result of faith or knowledge depending on the sphere in which this creative work took place: in the sphere of the spiritual or the physical world. That is why the values of faith and of knowledge are always equal in the eyes of man. He sticks to theses of both faith and knowledge as long as he is sure of their truthfulness and until he discovers within himself or in the surrounding world some contrary theses and facts. When they appear man equally rejects the object of faith or of knowledge searching for a different explanation of the unknown phenomenon worrying him. Man seeks the truth and both faith and knowledge serve him on the path to it, help him reach it and give him joy and pleasure satisfying his want of knowing the unknown and the new.

The conclusions from the above-said are evident:

1. Faith is not the sphere of emotions and ignorance, while knowledge is not a characteristic of scholarly people: both are the need and essence of all people from the most ignorant to the most scholarly ones.

2. They equally exist, not excluding one another, but not like two different forms of cognition, faith being the lowest and knowledge—the highest form. They are applied to different phenomena and objects: faith—to facts inexplicable by visual reality, and knowledge—to quite explicable ones.

3. Both faith and knowledge always tell man only truthful things, necessary for his life, bringing him indubitable and high values. With them man is happy and satisfied, without them—gloomy, cowardly, and miserable.

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## Ivan Ilyin's Philosophy of Religion

The contribution of I. A. Ilyin to the Russian philosophy and the Russian self-consciousness is hard to underestimate. Moreover, to have a full idea of the Russian philosophy within the bounds of concepts and principles worked out by it by the beginning of the 20th century one has to know and assess the essence of his social and philosophical views.

Ivan Ilyin, a talented scholar with a rare knowledge of world culture and philosophy, spent a greater part of his creative life outside the borders of his native country but remained invariably a Russian, a patriot, a keeper and continuer of Russian cultural traditions.

Up to his last days he was engaged in literary activity writing works that dealt with the most crucial issues of history, philosophy, ethics, theory of culture and social order. He was the author of hundreds of articles, and over thirty books and pamphlets.

A major branch of his research was the philosophy of religion. This sphere of the knowledge of human life and history has for long been excluded from the spiritual life of Soviet people. Even specialists seldom refer to it. On the depressing background of oblivion and ignorance of the sources of national life, the religio-philosophical works of Ivan Ilyin present a special interest for the modern reader filling a vacuum in the national culture.

In the long row of treatises on the philosophy of religion by authors domineering in world philosophical literature the works of Ilyin strike one with their originality, distinct national character and consistent approach to the assessment of the idea of Orthodoxy.

Ivan Ilyin not merely had a profound knowledge of the principles of the world philosophical thought but also rightly defined the place and role of the Russian philosophy in the process. He was convinced that the national religious philosophy had to review its calling, particularize its subject and methods in the light of "the past wanderings and downfalls" and, having achieved "clarity, truthfulness and vitality",

reject imitation of Western patterns. It becomes her more not to invent or copy, but to turn to the depths of the national spiritual experience and be "a convincing and priceless research into the spirit and spirituality". Ilyin connects the regeneration and flourishing of Russian religious philosophy with the departure from idle philosophizing and structuring of abstract models. It is only on this path that philosophical thought would be able to offer the Russian people, humanity as a whole, "something significant, true and profound". Otherwise it would "come to be a dead and useless burden in the history of Russian culture".

Ilyin devoted much time to studying the history of theology and religion, the classic German philosophy and the heritage of the Russian religious thought, to which his work "Axioms of Religious Experience" testifies, and developed the teaching of the obvious as applied to the concrete reality of Russian Orthodoxy. That is what distinguishes his philosophical views from those of Rozanov, Merezhkovsky, Berdyaev and Bulgakov.

It should be stressed that in all his works Ilyin invariably turned to the problems of religion and spirituality, using every opportunity to discuss the eternal issues of faith, its sources and ways of development, its place in human life.

His two-volume "Axioms of Religious Experience", a major work dealing with the problem of philosophical substantiation of religion, was especially dear to its author. He dedicated it to his wife, Natalia Ilyina, his true friend and associate. The work was published in Paris in 1953, shortly before Ivan Ilyin's death. He started working on it in 1919 when the philosopher, proceeding from the idea that "integrity of faith is an axiom of genuine religious experience", tried to reveal other axioms of the kind and analyse them.

"From the very beginning", Ilyin wrote, "I came to the conclusion that I could not and should not follow the road of inductance, that is, to study all phenomena which in everyday life and sometimes

in literature are referred to as 'religious': there was no need to collect an endless gallery of such phenomena with the purpose of exhausting their inexhaustible volume and drawing from them all possible generalizations."

Bypassing human prejudice, and multitudes of fears and superstitions, searches and delusions, he turns to the spiritually-sound, living and genuine religious experience.

Today the problems of faith and the Church transcended the bounds of rhetorics which has for a long time been the case. It is to be hoped that the rebirth of the Russian Orthodox Church our flock has been looking forward to will come to be a full-fledged process.

However, for that expectation to become a reality the spiritual experience already

accumulated should be assimilated by those in search of the sacred mysteries of the Holy Spirit. And here the "Axioms..." of Ivan Ilyin, in which he strives to reveal the nature of religious spirituality, may be of great benefit to us.

"Axioms of Religious Experience" consist of two parts including 27 chapters. The text is almost completely devoid of quotations and references. Every chapter, however, has addenda in which the author cites relative opinions and offers his comments, sometimes of a polemical nature. The book, which is of great scientific value, testifies to a literary talent of its author and therefore possesses special spiritual power and cogency.

Offered below is a chapter from this work by Ivan Ilyin.

*I. A. Ilyin*

## From the Book "Axioms of Religious Experience"

### Foreword

Any religious confession and act have as their foundation a peculiar religious experience. This experience demands of a man reverential attention and careful creative approach: a believer must take care of his faith, of his spiritual purity, bringing his experience into accord with the Lord. He must spiritualize, purify, fortify, develop, deepen and form his spiritual experience, otherwise the pressure of worldly circumstances, considerations, interests and compromises, personal weak-sightedness and the power of all-obliterating time will distort this precious experience and unwittingly, from generation to generation, bring it to degradation and ruin. Such is the case with modern humanity: it has retained confessional organizations, dogmata, teachings and rites, but its religious experience ceases to be vital, genuine and sincere, is losing the power of its fire and light, and this impotence robs him of ideological and creative force in the struggle with the rising militant godlessness. Modern humanity abounds in the "Orthodox", "Roman Catholics", "Protestants" for whom Christianity is alien and incomprehensible; we are already used to see in our midst "Christians" by name only, who are devoid of religious experience and know nothing of its essence. And this peculiar unreligiousness of people belonging to a religion comes to bother us less and less. It testifies to the depth of the spiritual and religious crisis we are going through.

However, those of our contemporaries whose religious faith is still alive and has overcome all temptations and enticements of spiritual "draught", must realize the present situation and think of the essence and source of genuine religious experience. What is needed is to return, first, with the mind's eye and then (without fail!) with the entire soul to the ever-living luminaries of true religiosity and, as far as possible, to relive their experience, compare it with the scant experience of today and draw the appropriate conclusions. They believed not the way we do now. They believed differently for it was differently that they loved, contemplated, saw the world, prayed, willed, thought and built their life. First and foremost their belief was integral: it embraced their entire being and determined all their actions. One who will penetrate into it with his heart and mind, will realize that the integrity of faith is an axiom of genuine religious experience:



and once he perceives the axiom, he would ask himself a question: are there any other axioms of religious experience and what are they like?

The purpose of my study, started as far back as 1919, is to solve this question.

In the process of finding and formulating axioms of religious experience I came to the conclusion that I could not and should not follow the road of inductance, that is, to study all phenomena which in everyday life, and sometimes in literature, are referred to as "religious": there was no need to collect an endless gallery of such phenomena with the purpose of exhausting their inexhaustible volume and drawing from them all possible "generalizations". I came to the conclusion that otherwise I had had to deal with human prejudice and a multitude of superstitions, fears, searches and errors, with manifestations of blind passion, frenzy and antireligious magic, with the insanity (the sphere of religious theopathy and pathology) and depravity of the soul (the sphere of religious terathology), that is, phenomena resulting from the loss, or rejection and defying of axioms of sound, vital and genuine religious experience.

Upon realizing it, I did not completely renounce inductance but limited it in scope and set before it a spiritual-intuitive and philosophical task. I limited its scope not with the help of an arbitrarily formulated abstract concepts which would have brought me to deductive methods, but by demanding spirituality of human religion, for spirituality is one of the basic axioms of religious experience. Not every so-called religious state of the human soul carries spiritual weight and has spiritual purport; but it is only in spiritual religions that axioms of religious experience are observed. Therefore I was looking for those axioms in spiritual religiosity, and I have to admit that the more spiritual is human faith, the fuller are the axioms I found observed in it; and further—in all phenomena of blindly intuitive, morbid or perverted religiosity one may easily follow and ascertain non-spirituality and even antispirituality destroying axiomatic bases of religious experience and distorting the religion proper, its prayers, teachings and rites; wayward personal experience substituted chimera for the dogmata, created dead mechanical or definitely sacrilegious prayer, ugly and even monstrous rites, and immoral "church" practices. If the entire history of human religions were examined with this law in mind, a lot of things would be seen in a new light staggering the soul.

So, the structure of genuine religiosity, in its best patterns, was different. But in what way exactly? To answer the question it is necessary to look into the depths of religious acts of the founders of a religion and try to formulate their axiomatic bases. Naturally, every believer would turn first of all to the founders of the confession he belongs to and try to assimilate the axioms of their religious experience—not only the dogmata they formulated, and not merely the canons of church organization, but their religious experience and, particularly, the axioms of that experience.

And naturally enough, I, born and nurtured by the Orthodox Christianity, have entered upon this very road.

That is exactly what determined the purpose of my research: it does not deal with dogmatic problems and liturgics, penerology and soteriology, does not examine canons, it concentrates on a personal spiritual state of a believer ("pneumatic actology"). It should be noted that personal religiosity of the great founders is examined by me in its axiomatic bases, not in a subjective peculiarity of any one of them. The one who is capable of feeling profoundly the spiritual act of another person, has evidently long perceived that the Spirit in Apostle St. John the Divine breathes and contemplates not the way it does in Apostle Paul; that religious acts of St. Macarius of Egypt and St. Augustine the Blessed differ; that St. Gregory of Nazianzus and Apostle Peter "think" differently; that the experience of Apostle James is not the same as that of Origen; that the religious act of St. John Chrysostom is different if compared with the act of St. Athanasius of Alexandria. Tertullian contemplates and thinks not the way St. John of Damascus does. The asceticism of St. Basil the Great differs from that of St. Simeon the New Theologian. St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory Palamas differ in their assessment of the bounds of unity; and the role of the flesh is understood differently by St. Gregory Palamas and Origen. And all that has a bearing not on dogmata, rites or canons, but on religious experience and the acts it comprises.

Given the faith in Christ and general harmony of the teaching, the religious acts of all these luminaries of the Orthodox Christianity have different structure; and it would be a highly edifying task to take up the profound study undertaken by I. V. Popov and show a peculiar pneumatics of each act.



The purport of my search was ambitious. I searched for the axiomatic "forms", or "laws", or "bases" of their religiosity conditioned by their faith and imparting grandeur to it. Sometimes these bases were formulated by the zealots, sometimes just implied; they might also be implemented in acts as self-evident. Discovering the axioms, I came to the conclusion that they had not only to illumine the path for us Orthodox Christians, as a kind of eternal pneumatic commandments, but also for Christians of all other confessions. Moreover, all through the history of human religions they have been the foundation of any true religiosity in general, an unflagging criterion for all times and nations—though not dogmatic, liturgical or canonical, but "pneumatic" and "actological" one. The more exact and complete was the observance of these axioms in other religions (for instance the axioms of spirituality, spiritual acts and contemplation, of catharsis, integrity, sincerity, humility and asceticism), the more perfect human religiosity turned out to be, the purer and more powerful were its prayers, the more sincere and symbolically profound were its rites, the more dignified was its "church" practice, and the closer its spirit was to the Gospel and to the spirit of the Orthodox Christianity. Along these lines my research has long acquired the meaning of Orthodox apologetics.

Proceeding along these lines, I have also come to the conclusion that a non-Christian in his act may be wholly religious: ignorant of the truth, he may accept his faith with the vital sincerity and fullness which would have become a Christian within the bounds of Christian faith; and in spirit he may be so close to Christianity that a belated wish may be awakened in the soul of the researcher "to make the last scales fall from his soul"... if it had been possible.

It refers primarily to the Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius who did not "see" Christ during their earthly life.

Therefrom the natural and necessary conclusion that the Spirit of the Lord, in the course of history, has never left the so-called "pagan" peoples, which prior to Christ comprised the entire humanity, and are now totalling some two-thirds of the population of the globe. The entire humanity is included into the great plan of "Divine economy".\* In my research I was guided by the words of Apostle St. John the Divine: *...ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him* (1 Jn. 2.29).

And indeed, the pagan world had its mediators, prayers and righteous who, because of time or space dividing them, did not see Christ. Pagan peoples were not at all cast away by the Lord, they were not dead spiritually—the multitude doomed to perdition; they had their share of Revelation, their inspired wisdom, their living religiosity and virtue. It is not for nothing that as far back as the 2nd century A. D. St. Justin the Martyr spoke of the "seed of the Word" which was "implanted into all humanity", and thus everyone who lived according to this Word was a Christian before Christ. It is not for nothing that St. Clement of Alexandria turned in his "Pedagogue" to the thoughts of stoic Musonius Rufus, that St. Ambrose compiled Poseidonius and Cicero, that Tertullian considered Seneca almost a Christian (*saepe noster*), Lactantius praised him acknowledging his words as "almost divine", and St. Jerome the Blessed even included him in the "catalogum Sanctorum". It is not for nothing that the Early Church sometimes placed images of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in the narthex of her temples. Great religious philosophers of the pre-Christian epoch were as if laying the way for Christ's revelations, not so much in the sphere of the dogma, as in the sphere of religious experience and act.

So in our time every believer should be prepared to answer questions put by people belonging to different religions and confessions and, especially, by non-believers about the sources and foundations of his faith, for we live in an epoch when the sources are evidently "discredited", and the foundations rejected and desecrated. The foundation of every religious faith is the personal religious experience of a man, and the source—the Revelation he lives through in that experience. A modern man has no right to be helpless and bewildered in the face of his religious experience. He should actively and with all responsibility build it and keep to it as to the true path leading to God; he should know where he is going and not lose his way in the fog of a multitude of faiths and temptations; he should know what his faith is like and why he considers it the right one; he should be

<sup>1</sup> Prince S. N. Trubetskoi says to the effect: "Logos is a true teacher of mankind and man" (*Teaching on the Logos*, 54). Max Müller writes: "There is something in religion pointing to the Divine direction" (*La science de la religion*, 30).



able to answer the questions of the wavering and the helpless and be eager to come to their aid. In other words he should be the master of his religious experience, so as to be able to defend it from temptations and encroachments and to help other people whose religious act has not yet matured.

As has been mentioned above, those other people may belong to a different confession and religion; they may be people "not yet born" religiously, asleep or "half-dead" spiritually; they may be the enemies of any faith and militant atheists. A modern believer should have in his experience a word of help and advice for all, especially those who, caught up by the wave of blind godlessness, waver and call for help. The time has passed when people not integral in their religious experience and quailing at their unintegrity, preferred "not to touch upon these questions" fearing that "the word", as a weapon of "reason", would undermine and destroy the last foundations of their religiosity. Indeed, a blind, idle and irresponsible word, a servant of the abstract and blindly rational thought, could harm unintegral and timid religious experience. But that time is no more: all idle and irresponsible words the blind reason accumulated in the epoch of the so-called enlightenment, i. e., actual spiritual dullness, have long been pronounced, printed and spread all over the universe. What might have been destroyed has either crashed down or has grown in strength and become firmly established. We have entered a new era. The time has come of untimid faith, spiritually purposeful religiosity proceeding from the heart, built up by inner contemplation, affirming its worth and soundness and aware of its path, religiosity integral and sincere, which is leading man, through humility and asceticism, to the communion with God. It is this faith and this kind of faith that my research is to serve.

However, it is the text of the book proper that may make it all clear.

The book consists of two parts: 27 chapters expounding the results of my research almost completely devoid of quotations and references, and "literary addenda" to each chapter in which original texts are given of remarkable statements on the issues discussed, the relative edifying historical phenomena and events, and, in some cases, my explanations and polemical commentary that did not find place in the chapter proper.

And so, I plead with the thoughtful and thorough reader of my book, first, to read not only the chapter but also its literary addenda, and, second, to pass his judgement on the book only after reading it to the end, for it is an integral whole from its title to the final line. And, then, let us keep in mind the wise maxim of St. Basil the Great: "He that judges a work, let him approach it almost as well versed in the matter as the one who wrote it" (Letter 196 to Neocesarians).

Now, if the presentation of the theme within the limits set by me seems inexpedient to someone, let him make his own research, but may he not think that the problem of "pneumatic actology" is not essential and is just to be passed by.





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